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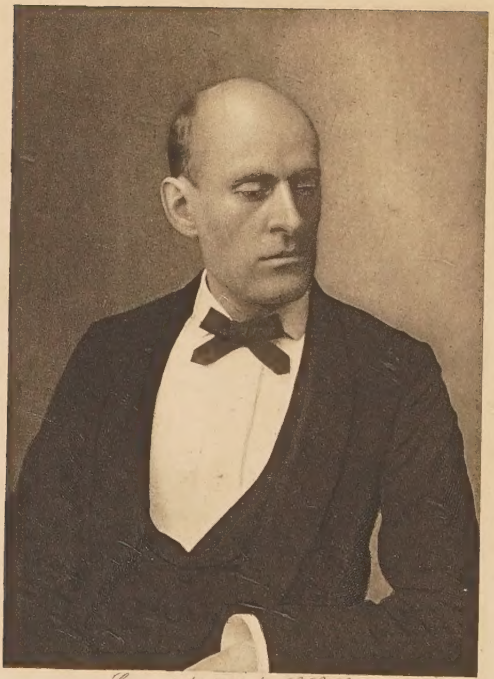
THE WORKS OF EUGENE FIELD

Vol. XI



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THE WRITINGS IN PROSE AND VERSE OF EUGENE FIELD

SHARPS AND FLATS

I

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S
SONS NEW YORK 1911

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Introduction

IT is something over eleven years since I assisted Eugene Field in the publication of "A Little Book of Profitable Tales" and "A Little Book of Western Verse." They consisted of what he deemed the best of his verse and prose that had appeared prior to 1888, selected with a jealous personal care not bestowed on his other collections. They remained the favorite children of his pen to the last, possibly because they were his first love, but more probably because they represented the culling from the work of ten of his most fruitful years.

It is easily within the fact to say that Eugene Field contributed one hundred times as many words as compose these volumes to the column in the Chicago *Daily News* (now the Chicago *Record*) which, under the title of

"Sharps and Flats," won him recognition as the most popular newspaper paragrapher in the United States. It is a simple calculation, which the reader may make for himself. Six days of the week for twelve years he wrote what made the even column, to a line, of "leaded agate" which appeared almost invariably in the last column of the editorial page of that paper. This column averaged two thousand words. Multiply this by three hundred and thirteen days each year for twelve years, and the product is a grand total of 7,512,000 words. The odd 512,000 may be deducted for the interruptions, which occurred with increasing frequency during the later years of Mr. Field's life, so leaving 7,000,000 words of literature, ranging all the way from the most ephemeral paragraph on a passing event to as exquisite bits of prose and verse as ever illumined the pages of a newspaper.

Before coming to Chicago, Eugene Field had attracted some attention in the newspaper offices of the country by his Denver *Tribune* primer stories. But his real career as a newspaper writer and author dates

from August, 1883, when his connection with the *News* first began to show in paragraphs under the commonplace heading of "Current Gossip." In such a paragraph as this (August 16, 1883):

> It is said, though not authoritatively, that, purely upon grounds of self-protection, the buffaloes are fleeing to the Yellowstone Park in great numbers,

there was the flavor of Field's peculiar humor, which was still present in the last paragraph he ever wrote. To appreciate this humor at this late date it needs to be recalled that President Arthur, with a hunting-party of distinguished friends, was in the Yellowstone Park at that time.

On August 31, 1883, the title "Current Gossip" gave place to that of "Sharps and Flats," which was retained to the end. This heading was taken from the title of a play by Clay M. Greene and the writer, then being performed by Messrs. Robson and Crane.

Mr. Field's early work had the character of the breeziest sort of table-talk. It consisted of daily gossip about persons and things. From the President and affairs of

state down to the doorkeeper of a local theatre and the most trivial happening of the day, everything was grist to his whimsical mind. Sometimes his whole column would be filled with a "Profitable Tale," but more often it was broken up into forty or more paragraphs, upon as many different subjects. I have counted twenty-nine political paragraphs out of a total of thirty-three; and again, I have known more than half of a larger total devoted to the national game of base-ball, of which Mr. Field was an ardent and critical follower.

The greatest number of paragraphs I remember to have seen in the "Sharps and Flats" column was sixty-four, and this was in October, 1894—long after Mr. Field had abandoned the theory that the wit of a paragraph consisted in its brevity.

In his earlier days Mr. Field was addicted to the use of such phrases as "we opine," "we are free to admit," "we violate no confidence," "we are pained to learn," etc., in opening his paragraphs. He employed them ironically until they became a habit, from which he was rudely shocked when,

during his absence, his associates filled his column with miscellaneous comments all beginning with his favorite expressions.

Political comment largely predominated in the early years of "Sharps and Flats." Mr. Field was permitted the utmost freedom in his paragraphs, which often resulted in a conflict of views between his column and the more formidable brevier type of the editorial page. In the campaign of 1884, when the *News* was strongly Mugwump and favored the election of Mr. Cleveland, the "Sharps and Flats" column was persistently, not to say "perniciously," active in advocating the election of Mr. Blaine. It was about this time that Mr. Field advised Mr. Cleveland, then Governor of New York, to follow the advice of Mr. Dana to "turn the rascals out," by pardoning all the convicts in the State prison.

It was not until 1885 that Mr. Field's column betrayed in the daily use of archaic English the effects of his browsing in Malory's "Morte d' Arthur," Percy's "Reliques," and British balladry. About the same time he indulged in frequent imita-

tions of Dr. Watts, often taking infinite pains to pass them off on the reader as genuine. Mr. Field took especial delight in composing verses in which the mixed metaphor fairly bristled, as in the following, attributed to a "Missouri poet":

> In Cupid's artful toils I roll,
> And thrice ten thousand pangs I feel;
> For Susie's eyes have ground my soul
> Beneath their iron heel.

Along in 1888 his writings began to reflect the spirit of bibliomania, which possessed him from that time on to the end. In the same year Mr. Field indulged in frequent paraphrases of Horace, some of them genuine efforts to interpret the spirit of the Sabine poet, and others grotesque in their adaptation of that spirit to modern incidents. To this same period we are indebted for a majority of the lullabies that form such a noteworthy feature of Mr. Field's collected verse.

In September, 1889, Mr. Field went abroad, and was absent from the United States until December of the following year.

His "Sharps and Flats" at this time afford an interesting running comment on British and European people and their habits. His inborn Yankee spirit was accentuated by attrition with English stolidity and French frivolity. Much of his best verse bears a foreign date.

On his return, a noticeable change appeared in his daily column. There was less of personal persiflage and more of the philosophy of life and events. The paragraphs became less numerous and personal, and more bookish in tone and reference. Mr. Field was thenceforth a willing victim to the mania for collecting old and odd editions of books and engravings. Frequently one theme sufficed to fill his column, until, in 1895, he printed "The House" and "The Love Affairs of a Bibliomaniac" in successive chapters of three hundred agate lines each.

More than ninety per cent. of all the verse Mr. Field ever wrote first saw the light of print in "Sharps and Flats." I venture to believe that in the following pages there is preserved more of the exhaustless gayety of

Eugene Field's daily life than in any other volume of his collected works. There are touches of the elfish genius that found food for mirth or satire, for quip or sentiment, in everything that daily attracted the attention of his kind — as he regarded all mankind. From first to last it is as singularly free from the maliciousness that leaves a sting as are the writings of the gentle Charles Lamb.

Many a thought, a pregnant phrase, a significant incident in the history of our time, its politics and daily life, is herein caught up by Mr. Field and crystallized in a verse or paragraph which was apt when written and is worthy of preservation in more permanent form than that in which it was originally printed. Mr. Field's felicitous command of English rhythm and deftly worded phrase nowhere appears to better advantage than in this volume where rhymes and verbal eccentricities are his playthings.

This collection contains several instances where Mr. Field attributes verse of his own composition to others — a form of humor in which to the end he took peculiar delight.

The seventeenth and last chapter of "The

Love Affairs of a Bibliomaniac" was printed under the "Sharps and Flats" title, October 30, 1895. The last column of "Sharps and Flats" from the pen of Eugene Field was printed November 2, 1895. Two days later the man who for twelve years had filled it with his odd conceits, his effervescent wit, and his thoroughly American humor, all expressed in faultless English, was dead.

SLASON THOMPSON.

CHICAGO, October 16, 1900.

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Sharps and Flats

GOSSIP OF BOOKS AND MEN WHO MAKE THEM

What is Fame?

SINCE it appears that Matthew Arnold is neither the man who betrayed his country nor the man who wrote the "Light of Asia," it is surmised he can't amount to very much, unless, perchance, he should happen to be the author of Arnold's writing-ink.

October 23, 1883

Literal Retorts Courteous

IT is said that when James T. Fields dated one of his letters at Manchester-by-the-Sea Oliver Wendell Holmes replied in a note dated "Beverly-by-the-Depot." But this species of the retort courteous did not origi-

nate with the funny Dr. Holmes. Years and years ago, Bishop Comstock of Connecticut addressed a note to Henry Ward Beecher under the date of Whitsunday morn, to which Mr. Beecher replied the next day under date of Washing-day morn.

November 20, 1883

Pen-Picture of George William Curtis

A CURRENT newspaper paragraph says that "George William Curtis at fifty-six is a handsome man with snow-white hair and whiskers," etc. Mr. Curtis was in Chicago about two months ago. At that time his hair was not snow-white; it was very far from snow-white — it was plentifully streaked with gray. Curtis's profile is fine; we suppose it might be called classical. The forehead and nose are particularly good. The chin is faulty, as one sees, when Mr. Curtis turns his face full in view, that it has a dimple, and we have yet to find a man with a dimple in his chin who has any staying qualities. The lower part of Curtis's face is full of contradictions: the mouth is square, yet the lips are decidedly sensuous, and

there is an expression of finickiness and effeminacy about them and the mouth. Curtis parts his hair in the middle, and that lends him an air of effeminacy again; yet his deep, musical voice is a splendid proof of his virility. He does not seem to be overnice in the particular of dress, his apparel being stylish and neat, but strictly modest. He has deep wrinkles, and he seems to wear an expression of continual worry. His whole appearance is that of an overworked confidential clerk in a metropolitan jewelry-store.

July 28, 1884

The Athletic Hawthornes

When Mr. Julian Hawthorne, the novelist, was a student in Harvard College, John C. Heenan was his instructor in athletics, and Hawthorne took so kindly to this sort of training that Heenan used to say to him: "If you put yourself under my care I 'll guarantee that in less than two years you can lick any man in America." When tales of his son's predilections and of the preposterous future which the pugilist had mapped out reached the ears of Hawthorne

père he was inexpressibly shocked, and he took pains to have Julian removed altogether beyond the influence of the genial prize-fighter. But his fondness for athletics still sticks to Hawthorne, and he keeps in training all the time. One of his daily practices is to run fifteen miles before breakfast. From his home in Sag Harbor down to the sea is a distance of seven and one half miles; he trots down every morning, summer and winter, takes a sea-bath, and brings back home a raging appetite for breakfast. Yesterday afternoon Mr. Hawthorne dined with Colonel Walter Cranston Larned, the distinguished art critic and music connoisseur, at the Chicago Club. During a lull in the conversation, and while the soup-tureen was being removed for the second course, Mr. Hawthorne excused himself for a moment or two. Observing that his honored guest was just a trifle flushed when he returned, Colonel Larned asked Mr. Hawthorne what it meant. "I have been taking a little spin out to Evanston and back," said Mr. Hawthorne, quietly. "Your Western roads are not so well gravelled as those I

have been used to, or I would not be out of breath at all."

Mr. Hawthorne's oldest boy is thirteen years old, and that he has inherited much of his father's spirit is evidenced in the fact that he can thrash any boy under sixteen years of age in Sag Harbor. This living terror enjoys the peaceful, amiable name of Felix. Mr. Hawthorne's oldest girl is fourteen, and she runs her mile in seven minutes. The four-year-old boy is the one who seems to have inherited the genuine Hawthorne imaginative qualities. He tells stories of wonderful dreams, and the other night he called to his mother: "Mamma, bring the light in here. I know there is something perfectly horrible crawling down the chimney."

December 3, 1885

Review of a Caterer's Pamphlet

WHILE it is universally conceded that Chicago is rapidly achieving world-wide reputation as the great literary centre of the United States, it is distressing to note that local critics are slow to recognize and to encourage the efforts of Chicago litterateurs.

We have been plunged into a most unhappy condition of mind by the continued neglect with which a recent literary work of our esteemed fellow-townsman, Mr. H. M. Kinsley, has been treated by the moulders of literary thought in Chicago. We do not know whether it is envy that lurks in the bosom of our literary critics and instigates them to ignore home industries, but we do know that for the last three months the *Dial*, the *Scandinavia*, the *Current*, and other hypercritical reviews have devoted much space to literature in Norway, France, Italy, Belgium, England, and Russia, but have had never a word to say of Mr. Kinsley's valuable treatise. We mention this plain truth more in sorrow than in anger.

Mr. Kinsley's book, which now lies before us, treats of topics of the greatest social importance. The introductory pages give a careful description of Mr. Kinsley's palatial refectory, and following these are several chapters on the prices of viands, upon the lofty dignity of which (the prices) Mr. Kinsley's claims to literary recognition would appear to be based. We learn that we can

obtain a quart of Nesselrode pudding with maraschino sauce for $1.25; a quart of tutti-frutti ice for $1; a dozen pommes de terre fraises for $3; Sauterne frappé for $2.50 per gallon; chicken à la Reine soup for $1 per quart; à la Marengo sauce for $2 per quart; fricandelle de foie gras for 75 cents per pound, etc. This important, not to say necessary, information is supplemented with a large number of recipes, which should prove of vast value to the humbler classes in this city. These recipes give careful instruction as to the compounding of mushroom salads, terrapin croquets, bisque of whitebait tongues, fricassee of canary-birds' livers, and other viands common to the groaning board of the metropolitan day-laborer. These recipes are stated in that idiomatic, direct English which instantly conveys intelligence to the mind of the reader, and joy ineffable to the soul of the printer at 40 cents per 1000 ems.

So much for what we may term the sordid, worldly, practical part of the book. On the succeeding pages the versatile author proceeds to treat of weddings, parties, re-

ceptions, etc.; and we note with pleasure that the importance of elaborate and costly refreshments is urged in each instance. But it is in his chapter on "Etiquette of the Table" that — if we may be allowed to use the figure — Mr. Kinsley out-Kinsleys Kinsley. Perchance it was this chapter that gave our contemporary, the *Dial*, and other critical reviews, pause. Howbeit, we shall venture to regale our readers with a very few specimen excerpts:

"Fashions change in modes of eating."

"Never appear impatient, and employ the time in agreeable conversation."

"Soup should be eaten carefully."

"Never eat with a knife."

"Never rise until the meal is finished."

"Sit upright, with grace and dignity."

"A fork should be used gracefully."

"Do not pick the teeth with the cutlery."

"Do not break the china or glassware unless you expect to pay double price for it."

These are a few of the pleasant and admirable fundamental laws which author Kinsley lays down for the guidance of his patrons, presumably the élite, the *crème de*

la crème, of Chicago. And, possibly with economic ends in view, Mr. Kinsley warns his readers, "Never eat so much of any article as to attract attention."

So we say we like the book, and, having perused it carefully, we feel warranted in declaring that it appears to us that none could quit Mr. Kinsley's soothing influences without exclaiming, in the historic language once employed by Ali Baba: "Allah be praised for this deliverance!"

March 29, 1886

Three Literary Fishermen

THE latest story told in literary circles is about Julian Hawthorne, Richard H. Stoddard, and the Reverend E. P. Roe. These three authors have been summering at Sag Harbor, Long Island, and if they have not had a frisky time it has not been because they were not the queerest combination ever got together. One day, so the story goes, the three went fishing in the harbor, and after toiling and sweating around in the sun for several hours Mr. Stoddard hauled in a two-pound sculpin, bristling like a hedge-

hog, and groaning dismally. Now, the sculpin is perhaps the most worthless fish that swims — it is, in sooth, so utterly worthless as to be positively humorous. Well, the sculpin floundered around in the bottom of the boat and groaned and panted prodigiously, while Hawthorne hilariously bantered Stoddard on his luck, and Stoddard laughed merrily at the awkward flounderings of the fish. But the Reverend E. P. Roe did not join in the mirth. He sat gloomily in the stern of the boat, and shook his head sadly. At last he addressed his companions. "How can you," he asked in tones of imposing solemnity—"how can you abandon yourselves to frivolous hilarity at this moment? It seems to me that a reverential silence would better become us, standing as we do in the awful presence of death."

July 31, 1886

The Lowell-Hawthorne Incident

Mr. Julian Hawthorne is finding out how it is himself. He has added interviewing to his other duties upon the New York *World*, and in last Sunday's edition of that

paper he signs his name to four columns and a half of as racy gossip as we remember to have seen. It is an interview with James Russell Lowell on the phases of social and literary life in England, with a sharp running fire of comment on the principal topics of the day. Lowell spoke with remarkable freedom, and the interview bristles with satirical personalities. He denominated the Queen as "very tough," and said of the Prince of Wales that he was "very fat." "He 's immensely fat, and his labors, such as they are, are chiefly physical. He delivers very good speeches, but I think there 's no doubt they are written for him. They are written by a man who also used to get up the addresses delivered by the late Duke of Albany (Prince Leopold)." Further on, speaking of Leopold, Mr. Lowell says a man who knew the prince well denominated him as a "great cad." This is a sample of the personal gossip which dribbled out of Mr. Lowell when he had thrown away the spigot of his discretion. The interview appeared, and it created a great sensation. The first thing Mr. Lowell

did on reading it was to write a letter denying most of the statements, and saying that he was not aware that Mr. Hawthorne was interviewing him. It is the old story, "he did n't know it was loaded." He allowed his tongue to run away with his discretion, and told the truth. Why should he regret it? Perhaps, however, the fumes of the turtle soup he consumed in England are stronger than his independence, and the smiles of royalty are dearer than his love of truth. Whether he knew his remarks were to be published or not is a matter of veracity between him and Mr. Hawthorne, for the latter prints at the first of his interview the following:

"I have come here on an errand —"

"Not of mercy," interrupted Mr. Lowell, laughing, as a brave man will, in the face of danger.

"No; to be merciful is not my privilege. I have come to learn from you what no one else can tell me — your opinion of England and the English. It is likely to be of more worth than any other American's, and I believe the American people want to know it.'

Mr. Hawthorne has written a card replying to Mr. Lowell's, but he does not seem disposed to take back anything. There is a tone of sadness that we are not surprised at. Reporters all feel that way at first. When Mr. Hawthorne has for a year or so been waking up men at two in the morning to interview them about the state of their health or as to the amount of their embezzlements he will get used to having the accuracy of his writings called to account.

October 29, 1886

The Official Explanation

One night aside the fire at hum,
Ez I wuz sittin' nappin',
Deown frum the lower hall there come
The seound of some one rappin'.
The son uv old Nat Hawthorne he—
Julian, I think his name wuz—
Uv course he feound a friend in me,
Not knowin' what his game wuz.

An' ez we visited a spell,
Our talk ranged wide an' wider,
An' if we struck dry subjects—well,
We washed 'em deown with cider.

Neow, with that cider coursin' thru
My system an' a-playin'
Upon my tongue, I hardly knew
Just what I was a-sayin'.

I kin remember that I spun
A hifalutin story
Abeout the Prince uv Wales, an' one
Abeout old Queen Victory.
But, sakes alive! I never dreamed
The cuss would get it printed—
(By that old gal I 'm much esteemed,
Ez she hez often hinted.)

Oh, if I had that critter neow,
You bet your boots I 'd l'arn him
In mighty lively fashion heow
To walk the chalk, gol darn him!
Meanwhile between his folks an' mine
The breach grows wide an' wider,
An', by the way, it 's my design
To give up drinkin' cider.

November 1, 1886

Charles Dudley Warner's Welcome to Chicago

Local literary circles were thrown into a condition of feverish excitement yesterday

by the rumor that Mr. Charles Dudley Warner, a well-known Eastern litterateur, had arrived in the city and was the honored guest of Colonel Wirt Dexter, the popular South Side Boniface. When the rumor first gained circulation it was discredited by very many, including that cautious and exacting body known as the Chicago Literary Club. Mr. T. Arthur Whiffen, the talented son of the wealthy fig-dealer and a member of the club in high standing, refused to believe that Mr. Warner was really in the city.

"As soon as I heard it," said he, "I stepped around to Dale's drug-store and asked the proprietor if he had received any confirmation of the rumor, and he replied in the negative. Mr. Dale is the general Western agent for Mr. Warner's works, and, as he very pertinently observed, he would have been likely to know if Warner were in the vicinity."

Later in the day, however, it was learned that Mr. Warner was indeed in the midst of us; in fact, along about three o'clock in the afternoon he was seen bowling down Drexel

Boulevard in Mr. Dexter's elegant dog-cart, behind Mr. Dexter's famous bay gelding Grover Cleveland. It was stated that Mr. Warner had come to Chicago for the purpose of delivering an address before the Clan-na-Gael on St. Patrick's day, the 17th instant, and had chosen as the theme for that address "The Theory that Ben Jonson did not Write 'Rasselas.'" Subsequently, however, it was ascertained that this statement was unfounded. In a conversation with Professor Benjamin F. Lawkins, president of the Emerson Literary Society and author of the scholarly brochure entitled "The Relations between Fifteen-Ball Poole and the Librarian of our Public Library," it was developed that Mr. Warner had produced the following works: "A Liver Safe Cure," "Some Golden Remedies," "Comets and their Relations to Purgative Pellets," and "What I Know about Farming."

We are told that Mr. Warner will leave for the Pacific slope in a day or two, but will be in Chicago again during the month of June, and we doubt not that upon his return he will be cordially welcomed and

handsomely entertained by our appreciative public.

March 4, 1887

The Friendship of Lowell and Rublee

To the Lowell literature that is flooding the Western country at the present time, Colonel Horace Rublee, the distinguished editor of the Milwaukee *Sentinel*, contributes an interesting page, reminiscent in character.

"It was in 1855," says Colonel Rublee, "that Colonel Lowell visited Milwaukee, and he was then in the prime of his intellectual and physical manhood, and to this day I can remember with what pride I introduced him to the large and enthusiastic audience which had assembled in Turner Hall to hear his eloquent and thoughtful address on 'Early English Ballads.' This lecture was conducted under the auspices of the Milwaukee Lecture Lyceum Bureau. In those days lectures were all the rage, and none but the very best talent was employed. The week after Lowell's appearance here Bayard Taylor came with his lecture on 'The Rhine,' and Lowell remained in town just for the sake

of having a visit with his bright young friend. Taylor must have been about thirty years of age, and he was as brilliant and as companionable a fellow as you could expect to meet. Well, Lowell and Taylor had a great time together, and as I knew the town pretty well and was inclined to be somewhat coltish myself in those days, it was my good fortune to be chosen as the third member of the party. Every night we would go around to Schimpfermann's hall and sit there, drinking beer and telling stories, until early morning. Lowell was a great hand for Yankee stories, and Taylor could mimic the German dialect and Irish brogue most artistically. As for me, I did most of the singing, for I had a fine barytone voice in those days; and when it came to the chorus Taylor would help me out with his deep, mellow bass, and Lowell would chip in with his clear, ringing, bird-like tenor. The last night they were in town (ah, how distinctly I remember it!) we all met at Schimpfermann's, and—how it came about I don't know—we got into a game of tenpins. I was an old hand at it, and so was Taylor, but Lowell had never

played before. Well, Taylor beat the first game with 215 pins, I followed with 187, and Lowell brought up the rear with 96. He was a preposterously bad player, but he was so earnest and so solemn about it that we did n't dare laugh at him. We played away until eight o'clock in the morning. In six hours Taylor had rolled 3136 pins, my score was 2944, and Lowell's was 1082. I am able to give the figures because I wrote them on the back of a daguerrotype that Lowell had made of himself that morning before he started away on the train.

"It lacked an hour of train-time, and we went up into Bumglegarten's gallery and had our pictures taken just as we looked when we got through that five hours' bowling-match. I have the daguerrotype still, and would not part with it for the wealth of a Midas. Lowell was pretty well played out, poor fellow, but he did not make any complaint. When he reached St. Louis, however, he wrote me a patnetic letter, full of scholarly reference and classical allusion. 'I am as sore,' said he, 'as if I had engaged with the Pythian monster or had been

drawn on the Procrustean bed; not a muscle in all my anatomy that does not ache, nor a joint that is not as stiff as the senile Anchises. What Simothean balm is there for me? I am, in short, reduced to such a condition that neither Pisistratus nor the afflicted son of Ægeus would envy me, and I have changed the subject of my St. Louis lecture from that of "Italian Literature" to that of "The Fall of Ilium."'"

When Colonel Lowell lectured on "The American Richard III. of Politics" in this city last month, Colonel Rublee came down from Milwaukee to renew acquaintance with him. They got together one evening in Colonel Wirt Dexter's back parlor and talked about the old Grecian and Latin poets until daylight. Neither gentleman could sing as well as he used to, but in his travels abroad Colonel Lowell had picked up a number of jocose Horatian odes and mirthful classic stories, which he recited with exceeding zest, and Colonel Rublee kept up his end of the conversation by narrating the many humorous tales and sketches he had heard at Madison during the sessions of the Wisconsin Legis-

lature, all which Colonel Lowell enjoyed mightily and made memoranda of, that he might repeat them to his family physician, a Dr. Holmes, whom he credited with being a fellow of hearty appreciation and keen wit.

March 31, 1887

Rhyming Address on a Letter

Not long ago Mr. Edmund Clarence Stedman, the banker-poet, received a packet bearing a superscription as follows:

> Herein there is a mournful ditty
> For E. C. Stedman, New York City.
> You 'll find him in his pristine glory
> In Broadway, 66, top story.
> So take this package to that Stedman,
> Or, by St. Hokus, you 're a dead man!

When Mr. Stedman opened the bundle he found that it contained a lot of manuscript from his friend Lowell. Among themselves these poets have a great deal of fun that the public never gets the benefit of.

April 18, 1887

William Dean Howells's Early Verse

It has become our rare fortune to become possessed of a volume printed at Columbus,

Ohio, in 1860, under the auspices of one William T. Coggeshall. This book is entitled "The Poets and Poetry of the West, with Biographical and Critical Notices." We think that the compilers of "The History of American Poetry," Mr. E. C. Stedman and Miss Ellen M. Hutchinson, ought to have a copy of this book, and we have asked the indefatigable Mr. Sizer (who is truly one of the most learned and most ingenious of Chicago bibliophiles) to hunt us up an extra copy for our Eastern friends.

"William D. Howells," says "Poets and Poetry of the West," "was born in Martinsville, Belmont County, Ohio, in the year 1837. His father being a printer and publisher, he learned the printing business in the paternal office at Hamilton, Butler County, whither his parents moved in 1840. Mr. Howells has been recognized as a writer about six years. He has been editorially connected with the Cincinnati *Gazette* and with the Ohio *State Journal*, and has contributed poems to the *Atlantic Monthly* magazine and to the *Saturday Press*, New York, and is now a regular correspondent of the Ohio *Farmer*."

The only misstatement in this biography is that concerning Mr. Howells's present employment. Mr. Howells is now in Europe, but not as the correspondent of the Ohio *Farmer;* he is connected with a pictorial magazine published in New York City. However, we may overlook the inaccuracy of the biographer as to this particular, since the information he had at hand was necessarily limited.

Before he left the West Mr. Howells wrote a good deal of poetry; it was the genuine stuff. His was a true poetic nature, to which the beauteous surroundings of his quiet Ohio home appealed for tuneful response, and ne'er appealed in vain. "Poems of Two Friends," "Drifting Away," "Dead," "The Poet's Friends," "The Movers," "Summer Dead," and "The Bobolinks are Singing" will live among the last lingering remnants of Western literature. We mean this; we do not say it in the satirical sense in which Porson said of one of Southey's poems: "It will be read when Virgil and Homer are forgotten." And, by the way, that nasty creature Byron stole this

witticism for his "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers"—stole it and spoiled it.

All the long August afternoon,
The little, drowsy stream
Whispers a melancholy tune,
As if it dreamed of June
And whispered in its dream.

There is no wind to stir the leaves,
The harsh leaves overhead;
Only the querulous cricket grieves,
And shrilling locust weaves
A song of summer dead.

This is a beautiful picture; it is full of suggestion, of beautiful suggestion. The reference to leaves reminds us of a little novel recently written by Miss Amélie Rives. This novel begins with a description of weather, and in this description we read that the dry leaves were driven hither and thither by the incessant rain.

That the poet Howells is an admirer of Longfellow appears in the poems "Drifting Away" and "The Movers," for the ancients spake truly when they argued that imitation is the sincerest admiration:

Parting was over at last, and all the good-bys had been
spoken;
Up the long hillside the white-tented wagon moved slowly,
Bearing the mother and children, while onward before
them the father
Trudged with his gun on his arm, and the faithful house-
dog beside him,
Grave and sedate, as if knowing the sorrowful thoughts
of his master.

The words "grave" and "sedate" appear to be favorites with the poet. They occur again in "The Poet's Friends":

The robin sings in the elm;
The cattle stand beneath,
Sedate and grave, with great brown eyes
And fragrant meadow breath.

It seems that in the field of humor and of dialect our Howells once exploited a genius whose fire now inspires the best and most popular of the Hoosier bards, viz., James Whitcomb Riley. To the Ohio *Farmer*, April 13, 1858, Mr. Howells contributed the following verses, entitled "Deep Rock":

A fell'r may live till he reckins he knows p'etty much all
wuth knowin',
But the longer he lives the more he finds that the world
keeps on a-goin'.

Last week I went down to York state to visit my marr'd
daughter,
An' ther I met up with a newfangled trick 'at folks calls
mineral water.

Was n't a-feelin' none too peart, sperrits was kind er
droopin';
Reckin a pint er tansy gin 'u'd er fetched me round a-
whoopin';
But Lizzie allowed when folks were sick along in the
spring they 'd orter
Doctor their livers with that 'ere stuff 'at folks calls mineral
water.

Harnsome liquor as ever flowed, an' clear as the Miamy
River,
But stronger 'n a yoke er speckled steers when it tackles a
fell'r's liver;
Took one swig on 't,—thess f'r fun,—then fer a day 'nd a
quarter
Did n't do much but loaf around tendin' that mineral water.

Made all the home folks madder 'n fire, specially Daughter
Lizzie;
Did n't hev time fer visitin' 'em—water kep' keepin' me
busy.
Of all the—say, ef you 're feelin' sick or under the weather
sorter,
Jest sen' to town f'r a bottle or two of that nice, smooth
mineral water.

Since Mr. Howells has left the West he has written very little verse. It is probable that in the noisy streets of Gotham he finds little inspiration to set the bird to singing in his heart. We remember to have heard the eminent John A. Cockerill say: "To the man fresh from the West, life in this great city is oppressive; the high buildings, the multitudes of people, even the very atmosphere, weighs him down." Yet we doubt not that ever and anon the poet Howells wanders in mind back to the pleasant rural scenes of yore, and that there then comes into his bosom that same yearning that forced from the gifted Ada Sweet the impassioned cry:

> Oh for the trill of a robin's note
> And a whiff of the new-mown hay,
> And oh for a book in the quiet nook
> Of the barn where the dorkings lay!

To the perusal of Mr. Stedman and his fair collaborateur we would commend this reference to our poet in a review printed in the New York *Saturday Press* nearly thirty years ago: "Mr. Howells is a man of genius,

nevertheless. All along the chain of his thought play keen lightning jets of poetic passion, which illumine the dark places of the human heart as lightning illumines the midnight sky."

May 19, 1888

Philology of the "Jag"

GALESBURG, ILLINOIS, July 12.

TO THE EDITOR: In your pleasant article of to-day you by no means exhaust the authorities which have to deal with the subject of jags. We find in Sir Walter Scott's "Border Minstrelsy" a ballad about St. George and "his most fearfullest fyghte with ye draggon," and here is one of the stanzas:

> When that Seint George had slayne ye draggon,
> He sate him down furninst a flaggon,
> And, wit ye well, within a spell
> He had a bien plaisaunt jag on.

And surely you remember this passage in the immortal Wordsworth's beautiful "Excursion":

> Tim, the good gossip dwelling in the cot
> Beyond the stile where love gregarious thrives,
> Tim hies anon behind the hawthorn hedge,

And has to do with budge 'til, overcome,
He sinks beneath his jag upon the sod,
And flies come leagues to feast upon his smile.

In Mr. Pettigrew's most interesting collection of epitaphs the following verses are to be met with as having been inscribed on a slab in the Ipswich burying-ground:

Here lies Middlesex Mag,
That tried to carry too big a jag;
Along came divell and toke the hag.

You seem to have forgotten that one of the most popular saints in the olden time was St. Jago, who, we can readily understand, was to mediæval humanity what Bacchus was to the ancients. It is from the proper name Jago that our word "jag" is derived. (*Vid.* Skeat, Stormonth, Richardson, Sweet, and Fallows.) Philologists agree that in the course of time words drop their tails, just as the human being has dropped or absorbed that caudal member or corporeal colophon which distinguishes the monkey from the naturalized voter. (*Vid.* Darwin's "Descent of Man" and Scott's "Tails of a Grandfather.") In the course of centuries

the final vowel of the good saint's name has become absorbed, and instead of the St. Jago of Arthurian days we now have the plain, simple, unostentatious jag, which, however large may have been its losses in other respects, has lost none of its popularity among the peoples of the earth.

Truly yours,

R. B.

July 14, 1888

Derivation of "In the Soup"

We should like to learn the origin of the phrase "in the soup."

This phrase implies the floating, uncertain condition of an entity (or being) that, foiled of a specific purpose, drifts helplessly, if not aimlessly, in the swirling tide of untoward and irremediable circumstance.

But whence comes the phrase? We are told that it came into vogue during the political campaign last summer, the gamins of New York noisily regaling the divers Democratic processions with the disheartening prediction that Cleveland was "in der soup."

A learned and ingenious friend of ours

suggests that the phrase may have arisen from the custom (prevailing among the humbler classes) of putting all refuse meat and scraps into the soup-pot. Therefore, to be "in the soup" signifieth worthlessness so far as other purposes may be concerned.

Another friend shows us that the phrase is a very old one in English literature. It is to be found in the "Schole House of Husbands" (a publication made as early as 1583), to wit:

> Now, full many evil things men do—
> They drinke, they lecher, and they whoop;
> But wherein shall these things profit you
> When that you once get in ye soupe?

And in Quarles's "Emblems" we are told that

> Even ye cursedest pride will droop
> When one doth flounder in ye soupe.

Bunyan represents Apollyon straddling across the way and threatening to put Christian into the soup; and in the old chap-books of "Jacke and ye Gyaunts" the threat of the "gyaunt" to put Jack into the soup is frequently to be met with.

Now, we shall really like to know whether this phrase as it is commonly used now comes legitimately from the ancients or whether it is modern coinage, originating perhaps in a ribald jest, the creation of a Bowery raconteur.

February 12, 1889

William Morris and the Sailor

WILLIAM MORRIS, the poet-author, seems to be an eccentric genius. His work is singularly beautiful; certainly no other writer at the present time has so strong and so pure a literary style. Even his prose works are poems. In person Morris is robust and square-built; he has shaggy hair, and he delights in rude apparel. He loves the sea, and nothing pleases him more than to be mistaken for a sailor; in fact, his appearance is somewhat nautical.

One night he was rolling through one of the narrow streets in the old city, when he was overhauled by a seafaring man. "Avast, there!" cried the stranger. "Don't I know you? Were n't you at one time the mate of the brig Sea Swallow?"

To be mistaken for a sailor was charming; to be taken for the mate of a ship bearing so poetic a name as the Sea Swallow was simply glorious. "Yes, I am he," said Morris, and he locked arms with the stranger, piloted him into an ale-house, and filled him full of liquids and substantials.

February 15, 1890

Two Estimates of Rudyard Kipling

I

Mr. Henry Guy Carleton has gone to the trouble of reviewing at some length the amusing criticism which Mr. Rudyard Kipling has passed upon the people of this country—their customs, habits, manners, and peculiarities. Unfortunately, the tone of Mr. Carleton's review is not dispassionate. Mr. Carleton himself appears to attach altogether too much importance to the young Indian's criticism.

The truth seems to be that Mr. Kipling is an unusually bright fellow who enjoys a somewhat exaggerated opinion of his own brightness; it is quite natural that he should

be somewhat swollen in vanity, for he has been flattered to an amazing degree since he woke up one morning and found himself famous. We certainly should expect to find youth susceptible to the charms of compliment, and we are free to confess that we recognize a distinct loveliness in that freedom and confidence with which youth gives expression to those views which it invariably has upon all human things.

Mr. Kipling's literary work is faulty, but it is brilliant and strong. There may be, as Mr. Carleton avers, twenty newspaper reporters in New York City capable of doing as good work as Mr. Kipling has done; at the same time, they have not done it and Mr. Kipling has.

The error into which Mr. Kipling appears to have fallen is an o'erweening greed to profit at once by the reputation made by his earlier publications. He is bulling his own market. The trade instinct is big within him. Mr. Kipling's business methods are not those of a literary man; he is a hustler, and we fear that he is also a paranoiac. He believes in

haying in sunny weather, no matter whether there is any grass or not, and he is working his boom for all there is in it.

Nobody should take to heart what this young man has to say of this country and its people. Much that he says is true. We are very different from other countries, and in that difference should we find continual reason for devoutly returning thanks to the Almighty. If there be aught of praiseworthiness in the progress of civilization, we stand forth as the conspicuous illustration of that progress.

We hope that Mr. Kipling will go ahead with cracking his whip. He is young and lusty and full of fight, and these things help to keep other things moving. We have much more respect for the sauciness of youth than we have for the hypocrisy of age; in other words, when we think of the absurd flatteries and lying arts which certain foreigners have employed to mulct us of our money and good opinion, we are disposed to regard Mr. Kipling's combative pertness as refreshing and praiseworthy to a degree.

January 16, 1891

II

Is Rudyard Kipling a young man?

Well, he confesses to being twenty-four years of age.

Is a man at twenty-four a young man?

That depends.

An American, an Englishman, a Frenchman, a German—these are young men at twenty-four.

But Rudyard Kipling is an Indian, and in India humanity develops much earlier than in the higher latitudes.

In India the males marry at fourteen years of age; one may be a grandfather at thirty.

Is it possible that Kipling, now twenty-four years of age, is at his perihelion, physically and intellectually?

February 19, 1891

Brusqueness of Tennyson and Dickens

A STORY illustrating Tennyson's brusque humor involves a gentleman who is beginning to be known this side of the Atlantic as the author of scholarly biographical monographs. Oscar Browning is professor of

history at Christ's College, Cambridge; he is about fifty years of age, is a bachelor, has aggressive manners, a short, stout physique, and a Hebraic cast of countenance. One day Professor Browning was walking in Regent Street, and suddenly he came face to face with the poet laureate. The two had met several times before, and Mr. Browning is hardly the man to forget a distinguished acquaintance. He rushed enthusiastically upon the poet laureate, grasped his hand, and overwhelmed him with effusive compliments. Tennyson, evidently surprised, regarded him with a stony glare.

"Why, Mr. Tennyson," explained the professor, "have you forgotten me? Don't you know me? I 'm Browning."

The poet laureate, continuing to regard the professor with that awful glare, answered gruffly: "So you are Browning? No, I 'm —— if you are!" And with these words he stalked away gloomily.

A somewhat similar rebuke is recorded of Charles Dickens. In his "Memories of Many Men" the late Maunsell B. Field tells of a call he made upon Charles Dickens while the lat-

ter was visiting Cincinnati in the spring of 1842. "There were not many persons in the room when we entered. Immediately behind us followed a small English gentleman of subdued and timid manners. Mr. Dickens was standing in front of the fireplace, with his coat-tails under his arms, gorgeously attired, and covered with velvet and jewellery. Mrs. Dickens was lounging on a sofa at the farther end of the room. We were duly presented by an usher, the master of ceremonies, and after exchanging a few words with the author of 'Pickwick,' retired to give place to the little Englishman who was behind us. Upon being introduced, this gentleman deferentially remarked: 'I had the pleasure of meeting you, Mr. Dickens, at Mr. Love's, in ——shire, two years ago.' Dickens looked him steadily in the face for a minute, and then answered in a loud voice: 'I never was there in my life.' 'I beg your pardon,' replied his interlocutor, overcome with confusion. 'It was in the winter, and [naming several persons] were there at the same time.' Dickens again gave him a withering look, and after a pause repeated in a still more elevated tone: 'I tell you, sir, I never

was there in my life!' Here Mrs. Dickens interposed, and addressing her husband, said: 'Why, Charles, you certainly were there, and I was with you; don't you remember the occurrence?' Mr. Dickens glared at her almost fiercely, and, advancing a step or two, with his right hand raised, fairly shouted: 'I tell you I never was there in my life!'"

Mr. Field proceeds: "I had never been so disenchanted in all my days. The unfortunate Englishman withdrew without another word, and my friend and I retired disgusted. I then for the first time reluctantly appreciated the fact that a man may be a great author without being a gentleman, a conclusion which I have frequently seen verified in my more mature years."

That Dickens was upon general principles a cad seems to admit of little doubt. It is better, perhaps, not to become so well acquainted with the objects of our hero-worship. Byron becomes unbearable, Shelley becomes pitiable, Keats becomes offensive, Swinburne becomes shocking, the more we study their personalities and pry into their private lives. One can hardly help losing

somewhat of his veneration for dear old Thackeray, even, when he learns of that literary giant's supersensitiveness: how he belittled himself when he applied himself to the small, small business of hounding Edmund Yates out of the Garrick Club!

March 9, 1892

The Evil Practice of Borrowing Books

THE practice of borrowing books is essentially an evil one in those who can afford to own books, and public libraries serve to encourage and foster the evil, though they are of very great value to the poor student. We think that, upon general principles, people should own the books they read. We believe heartily in buying books, reading books, and keeping books. As a reference a public library serves an admirable purpose, and in many instances it is of undoubted advantage to the people. But one that would be surely profited by books should own them if he can, and should have them for companions continually around him.

August 2, 1892

Hans Christian Andersen at the World's Fair

No child should come away from the World's Fair without visiting the Danish exhibit in the Manufactures Building, for in this particular exhibit is to be seen the large collection of mementos of Hans Christian Andersen. We unreservedly pity the boy or the girl who grows up without feeling the tender, persuasive influences of Andersen's teachings; fortunately, there are very few children anywhere in Christendom who do not at one period or another fall under the spell of this dear old man's genius.

In this collection of souvenirs to which we refer are to be found just such quaint relics as you would suppose would come from the great child-lover and child-teacher. Their quaintness and their simplicity prove their genuineness. We see the curious, old-fashioned chairs and sofa in which he used to sit, and the homely stove before which he used to warm himself, for, ough! that was a very cold country in which he lived, and there was need for big, broad, honest stoves.

How pleasant it must have been to sit in those stout chairs or to curl up in that hospitable sofa before that genial stove and hear the dear old master telling his pretty tales to a group of little folks, while all the time the fire in that genial stove kept humming, in a kind of crooning undertone, a half-cheery, half-solemn accompaniment to the dear old master's voice!

And here are the very spectacles through which his honest blue eyes beamed benevolently upon his little children; and here, too, is the curious high old hat he used to wear —do not touch it, lest you ruffle the nap which his big, homely, gentle hands so diligently smoothed and smoothed and smoothed until that curious high old hat became actually resplendent; and how the children shouted and scampered to him and clasped him about the knees and tugged at his coat-tails when, away up or away down the street, they saw by the sunbeams that danced around that glossy, curious old hat that their beloved friend was coming!

The table at which he wrote, and the silver candlesticks which were silent witnesses to

his labor; his footstool with its fading embroideries; the inkstand and the pens he used; the slippers in which he shuffled to and fro; the snuffers with which he reproved and corrected the lazy, complaining, sputtering candles; the pictures upon which he loved to look; the oval table with its old-fashioned spread, about which he and his boy and girl friends used to play at games those long, lovely winter evenings when it was cold outside and the storm king went blustering up and down the streets for little noses and ears and cheeks to pinch—these and so very many other delightful remembrances of your friend and mine it is very pleasant to find in this quiet corner of the Danish section.

If you are so disposed, you can see poems and tales that he wrote, yes, in his very handwriting, for there are many of his manuscripts, and here and there you will come upon dear little pictures he made and curious little figures carved or cut out of paper by him. No child need be told their meaning, for childhood has an art and a wisdom peculiar to itself, and this old friend of ours was a child to the very last.

It is restful to come out of the noise and confusion of the great parade and pomp and show all around about into this quiet little spot where reverent and loving hands have gathered together mementos of the kindly genius that shone for the little ones and the lowly of humanity. And who shall say that the spirit of the dear old master is not there? Why, one can almost fancy that in the quaint chair by the quaint stove there is to see that personality about which so many tender associations linger. And one can hear again the kindly voice and feel again the benediction of the friendly smile and gentle touch.

Elsewhere in the vast structure where you are to see these things and feel these softening emotions, other hands have brought together and piled up in confusion and imposing splendor the works of labor and science and art; and they are beautiful and rare and costly. The children should see them and be told of them, for to know of these things gives one a noble appreciation of this beautiful world of ours and of mankind.

Yet, after all these things have been seen and known, how ready is every one to turn

to the homely, pathetic memorials of that dear heart which beat in unison with the simplicity, the truth, the candor, the enthusiasm, the wisdom, and the pathos of childhood! Far nobler than the conquests of war, more beautiful than the triumphs of art, more persuasive than the logarithms of science, is that sympathy of the human heart for the little ones created in God's image, who bring with them to earth a promise and a foretaste of the joys in the kingdom of heaven.

July 4, 1893

No Use for Paper-Covered Books

THE writer of "Sharps and Flats" requests that publishers and authors send him no more paper-covered books. He simply throws away all books of this kind, it being his notion that a book that is worth reading is surely worth keeping, and is therefore entitled to a durable dress.

July 13, 1893

The Battle of the Realists and Romancists

THE chances are that to the end of our earthly career we shall keep on regretting

that we were not present at that session of the Congress of Authors when Mr. Hamlin Garland and Mrs. Mary Hartwell Catherwood had their famous intellectual wrestling-match. Garland is one of the apostles of realism. Mrs. Catherwood has chosen the better part: she loves the fanciful in fiction; she believes, with us, in fairy godmothers and valorous knights and beautiful princesses who have fallen victims to wicked old witches.

Mr. Garland's heroes sweat and do not wear socks; his heroines eat cold huckleberry pie and are so unfeminine as not to call a cow "he."

Mrs. Catherwood's heroes—and they are the heroes we like—are aggressive, courtly, dashing, picturesque fellows, and her heroines are timid, stanch, beautiful women, and they, too, are our kind of people.

Mr. Garland's *in hoc signo* is a dung-fork or a butter-paddle; Mrs. Catherwood's is a lance or an embroidery-needle. Give us the lance and its companion every time.

Having said this much, it is proper that we should add that we have for Mr. Garland

personally the warmest affection, and we admire his work, too, very, very much; it is wonderful photography. Garland is young and impressionable; in an evil hour he fell under the baleful influences of William D. Howells, and—there you are.

If we could contrive to keep Garland away from Howells long enough we 'd make a big man of him, for there is a heap of good stuff in him. Several times we have had him here in Chicago for eight or ten days at a stretch, and when he has associated with us that length of time he really becomes quite civilized and gets imbued with orthodoxy; and then he, too, begins to see fairies and flub-dubs, and believes in the maidens who have long golden hair and cannot pail the cow; and his heroes are content to perspire instead of sweat, and they exchange their cowhide peg boots for silk hose and mediæval shoon.

But no sooner does Garland reach this point in the way of reform than he gallivants off again down East, and falls into Howells's clutches, and gets pumped full of heresies, and the last condition of that man is worse than the first.

We can well understand how so young and so impressionable a person as Garland is should fall an easy prey to Howells, for we have met Howells, and he is indeed a charming, a most charming gentleman. So conscious were we of the superhuman power of his fascinations that all the time we were with him we kept repeating paternosters lest we, too, should fall a victim to his sugared and persuasive heterodoxy; and even then, after being with them an hour or two, we felt strangely tempted to throw away our collar and necktie and let our victuals drop all over our shirt-front.

The fascination of realism is all the more dangerous because it is so subtle. It is a bacillus undoubtedly, and when you once get it into your system it is liable to break out at any time in a new spot. But Garland is not yet so far gone with the malady but that we can save him if he will only keep away from Howells. In all solemnity we declare it to be our opinion that Howells is the only bad habit Garland has.

So we are glad to hear that there is a prospect of Mr. Garland's making his home here

in Chicago, where the ramping prairie winds and the swooping lake breezes contribute to the development of the humane fancy. Verily there will be more joy in Chicago over the one Garland that repenteth than over ninety-and-nine Catherwoods that need no repentance.

July 27, 1893

The Truth about Orange Groves

A CURRENT paragraph tells of the pine-apple and citron groves on Robert Louis Stevenson's estate in Samoa, and the implication is that they are paradisiacal spots. We are reserving all opinions as to groves until we have seen the groves. We have had a bitter, never-to-be-forgotten experience in that direction. Before we had ever seen an orange grove we fancied that it must be the most beautiful, the most delightful, the most restful spot in all the world. We pictured the joys of lying upon the velvety sward in the shade of this grove, listening to the solemn music of the wind in the foliage, and catching kaleidoscopic glimpses of the distant empyrean. This was all pleasant enough

in the warmth of a well-heated Chicago home. But the awakening from the poetic dream was rude to the degree of brutality.

What, in fact, is an orange grove but the lonesomest, dampest, chillest, most cheerless of all existing or imaginable things? The hideousness of its mouldy gloom is enhanced by the mathematically severe regularity in which the trees are arranged. And such trees! Wretched little creatures they are, reminding one, with their distressing burden of fruit, of nursery-bred, precocious children. They look so premature, so stunted, so unlike our notion of what a tree should be—who can help pitying them?

And how about the velvety sward? There 's not an inch of it, except in the mind of the dreamer! Sward, indeed! Ploughed ground is what it is actually, for the orange-tree must have plenty of moisture, and so the soil must be kept turned and broken. If you would fain stroll in an orange grove you must wear rubber boots and hump your shoulders, for the ploughed ground is wet and the trees are dwarfs. One stroll will suffice; you will then return

to your hotel, call a doctor, and nurse the influenza for ten days.

A good view of an orange grove is to be had from Mount Lowe or any of the other peaks back of the Sierra Madre valley.

Seen from above and at a distance of thirty miles, an orange grove presents a pretty spectacle, fresh, green, and picturesque. The farther away it is the more charming. Seen at its best, it is seen three thousand miles off through the eyes of the imagination of one poetically minded and kept at normal temperature by that sweetest of all human inventions, a well-regulated furnace.

May 23, 1894

Encouragement for F. Marion Crawford

THE new national library will have space for four million books. We mention this merely to encourage Mr. F. Marion Crawford to keep right on.

June 4, 1894

Small Price for a Great Poem

JULIA WARD HOWE received only five dollars for her "Battle Hymn of the Republic,"

and it was first printed in the *Atlantic Monthly*. It was worth more than that at that time, but it would probably not be accepted by any magazine now, for the reason that there is no demand for verse of that character. We do not rate it very high either as a patriotic inspiration or as a literary composition. But the context of contemporaneous history has made it great.

June 22, 1894

The Shoe-Strings of Methuselah

Our learned, ingenious, and charming friend Franklin H. Head is reported to have credited to Oliver Wendell Holmes the authorship of a story he told at a banquet at the Union League Club, when introducing the stalwart Rev. Dr. F. A. Noble to the rest of the company. He recalled the physiological fact that after fifty years of age men become appreciably smaller; by a gradual settling process they will lose in thirty years possibly one quarter of an inch in height.

"Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes," said Mr.

Head, "once discussed this fact very entertainingly among some friends. He pointed out in a fanciful picture the strange effect in the early days of the world. 'Imagine,' he said, 'men of biblical times who lived to be five hundred or one thousand years old thus growing shorter continually during the latter centuries of life. The settling we do in our brief lives must be but a bagatelle to the extended shortening process they endured. You can imagine Methuselah at the latter end of his span starting out of a morning and being saluted with:

"'"Good morning, Methusy; how do you find yourself?"

"'"Oh, pretty well," would be the answer, "pretty well for an old fellow. But I am bothered somewhat by my shoe-strings getting in my eyes."'"

Now, this amusing skit is indeed very Holmesy, and it originated in the Holmes family, but not with Oliver Wendell. The genial Autocrat's equally genial and witty brother John invented and told the story. A good many of the bright things said by brother John have been credited to Oliver

Wendell. The Autocrat was the famous member of the family, and as such he was honored with the paternity of all the bon-mots that bore the Holmes trade-mark.

December 17, 1894

The Poet Whittier's Taxes

Mr. Horace Fletcher, one of the most charming of New Orleans's charming people, visited Boston last summer, and while there he determined to make a trip to Amesbury, the former home of the poet Whittier. Mr. Fletcher has a poetic nature, and he reveres the memory of the dear old Quaker lyrist. He got aboard an electric car and whirled to and fro amid the quiet scenes in which Mr. Whittier used to participate, and presently he could suppress his emotions no longer; he had to unbosom his thoughts to a fellow-traveller, resident in Amesbury, a humble-looking man, seemingly a carpenter, for he had a kit of tools with him. Mr. Fletcher praised Amesbury and its people, and then he discoursed long and eloquently upon the poet Whittier and upon the honor

which his genius had reflected upon his townsmen and associates. Mr. Fletcher even quoted whole poems, by way of clinching his argument with his fellow-traveller; but, curiously enough, the Amesbury man sat silent and unmoved.

Finally, after our New Orleans friend had talked himself to the verge of bronchitis, the Amesbury man said, coldly and forbiddingly:

"We folks here in Amesbury don't think as much of Mr. Whittier as we did. You know we don't go much on a tax-dodger. While he was livin' he never paid no taxes on more 'n four thousand dollars, but after he died—howlin' Jehos'aphat!—it came to light before the jedge of probate that he wuz worth two hundred and sixty thousand dollars."

March 21, 1895

Max Nordau Approved

So far as the scope of our vision extends we are unable to detect any reason for suspecting that Max Nordau is not amply qualified to defend himself against any of the

adversaries whom his remarkable book has raised up. There is a probability, too, that a good many calmly observant people will love Professor Nordau for the enemies he has made.

April 26, 1895

THE POET'S RETURN

A POET, crazed by Mammon, hung
His harp upon the willows, and
Forgot the songs which he had sung,
Sweeping that harp with master hand.
Long wailed the Muse with much ado,
The votary which Mammon stole,
Till Mammon pitying her withdrew
The spell that bound the poet's soul.

The poet then with master hand
Took down the old familiar lyre
And sang unto a listening land
His song aflame with heav'nly fire.
Sing on, O poet, while ye may,
As sweetly as in years of old,
For thy sweet songs shall live for aye,
A grander heritance than gold!

August 17, 1883

A SHOSHONE LEGEND

THE brave Shoshones much revere
Our presidential Arthur,
And they proclaim him, far and near,
The mighty pale-face father.
This reverence, 't is said, is due
Unto a little caper,
Which, whether false or whether true,
Hath ne'er before seen paper.

Down in the Yellowstone, one eve,
Quoth Vest, the statesman-joker:
"Since time hangs heavy, I believe
I 'll start a game of poker."
He called the bold Shoshones round
And filled their pipes with Gravely,
And, seated on the dewy ground,
They all chipped in right bravely.

And lo! the President did choose
To lend approval hearty;
So, purchasing a stack of blues,
He sat in with the party.
Out spake the brave Po-Dunk-a-Wee,
Rending his purse asunder:
"Big Injun bet heap dollar he
Beat pale-face all to thunder!"

Whereat the pale-face chief sublime
Did manifest a wincing—
And yet allowed it was no time
For presidential mincing.
So none dropped out, but all came in,
Till groaned the pot with stuffing—
And, consequently, rose the din
Of multifarious bluffing.

And when the show-down word was spoke—
Alas, its dreadful uses!
The brave Po-Dunk-a-Wee went broke
On sixes full on deuces;
"Two pair," the brave Tim-Tom-Kee
moaned
Amid regretful blushes,
While other rash Shoshones groaned
O'er various bobtail flushes.

And then a miracle ensued
  Which blanched the copper faces —
Our Arthur, with rare fortitude,
  Showed down five awful aces.

August 22, 1883

A ZEPHYR FROM ZULULAND

FROM Onathlamba in the west,
Where rise the walls of Quangar,
And where the brave Bapedis rest,
Is heard a joyous clangor:
From Unyanyembe's pagan towers—
The Umtamtuna River—
Where dark Kabompo's noisome bowers
Disturb the Kaffir's liver;
Where bloom the nutmeg and the rose
And thrives the tapir greasy,
And where the Unzimkulu flows
Into the fair Zambesi;
Where dwells the cruel assagai
Among the fierce Potgeiters,
And Sekukunis live and die
As Amaswazaí fighters;

And from the huts of Mozambique
  Upon the northern shore,
Unto old Umoolosi peak,
  And fragrant Delagoa —
Around and round the tidings go,
  Inspiring vast thanksgiving
That all in spite of dastard foe
  Their monarch still is living.
Hail, monarch! Cetewayo, hail! —
  Great England's pagan hobby —
And bless thy fate that foes should fail
  To slay a nibs so nobby!

August 22, 1883

THE FRENCH MUST GO

UNTO his valiant aide-de-camp
Remarked the brave Bouet:
"To-morrow we will move along
To battle, *s'il vous plaît.*
Hard by the walls of Hue, we
Our pagan foe shall meet,
And then and there, *mon cher ami,*
We 'll warm him *tout de suite.*"

Next morn, as brave Wun Lung with zest
Partook his matin rice,
And stored away beneath his vest
A pie composed of mice,
Into his presence rushed Gin Sing,
And cried in sore dismay:
"Oh, save thyself, most potent king —
The Flenchmen come this way!"

Wun Lung looked daggers, and replied:
"If that 's the Flenchman's gamee,
We 'll meet him on the plain outside,
And lick him allee samee.
Close up the laundries, whet your swords;
And, with your spears in hand,
Call in the servile cooly hordes
And let the junks be manned."

When this commotion brave Bouet
Discovered from afar —
"I fear," he muttered in dismay,
"I 've made *un grand faux pas.*
I do not understand," quoth he,
"This hurrying to and fro;
But I suspect, from what I see
And hear, *je suis de trop!*"

The hostile forces soon imbrued
With murd'rous shock and blow,
And in the struggle that ensued
The Frenchman had to go.
The fierce Wun Lung, amid the strife,
Beheld brave Bouet near,
And took his horse-du-combat's life
With battle-axe and spear.

And when his horse-du-combat fell
  All lifeless at his feet,
Brave Bouet, with a sickening yell,
  Commanded a retreat.
Wun Lung now lolls in his abode
  From morn till dewy eve,
And eats his rat-pie *à la mode*—
  And Bouet takes "French leave."

August 24, 1883

A BATTLE IN YELLOWSTONE PARK

THE sun had slipped down
The blue slant of the west;
The pale, queenly moon
Sat upon the night's crest,
With her face from the world
Turned in shame half away,
As she fondly pursued
Her loved king of the day.

The Yellowstone camp
In the valley below,
With its tents like tombstones
Set out in a row,
Was quaking with fear;
For the word had been brought
That a train was en route
With bold kidnappers fraught.

The President lay
In his well-guarded tent;
The general hither
And thither had sent
The men of his staff
And the men of his troop;
The visiting statesmen
Were crouched in a group.

On the soft summer breeze
Came a sharp, startling sound.
For a moment all stood
As in fear's fetters bound.
"What was that?" whispered Robert.
Said Rufus: "Fly! Hide!
'T is the savage war-whoop
Of the robber's red guide."

"Man the outposts! Look sharp!"
The brave general said.
"Guard the President well."
And with field-glass he read
The circling horizon,
To south and to east,
Till his eye fell, at last,
On the skulking red beast.

Every eye in the camp
  Strained, the pale night to pierce;
Every hand clutched a gun,
  As by fear rendered fierce;
Every heart pounded hard
  At the ribs of its cage
As forms were spied, veiled
  By a thicket of sage.

Flash! each gun laughed a flame
  Like a demon at sport.
Crash! the still night was rent
  By the awful report,
And the craggy old mountains
  Reëchoed "Ha, ha!"
Till the sounds seemed to blend
  In a giant guffaw.

Hours and hours the camp watched
  Till the bright threads of dawn
Wove a shining gold veil
  For the night to put on.
Then, there in the sage-brush,
  In bullet-torn coats,
Lay the earthly remains
  Of a pair of coyotes.

August 28, 1883

HIS LORDSHIP, THE CHIEF JUSTICE

WHEREAS, it is alleged, to wit:
There cometh from afar
A certain party in whose cause
Herewith these presents are;
One Coleridge is said party's name,
A lord of high degree,
Well known unto this court and fame—
A judge, so called, is he.

As parties of the second part,
We, the appellants, pray
That sundry courtesies be shown
Said judge who comes this way;
And, furthermore, appellants crave
Said judge be dined and fêted
As would become said judge and court
Hereinbefore narrated;

And that said divers compliments
  Be also well intentioned,
As to delight said judge, so called,
  Above and afore mentioned.

August 29, 1883

A HINT FOR 1884

THE sage of Greystone, so they say,
Has two imported steeds;
The one is black, the other bay,
And both of noble breeds.
Before he bought these chargers rare —
Of stylish blood and tone —
He used to drive another pair,
A humble gray and roan.

When Tilden hankers after style
On boulevard or street,
A coachman reins the chargers,
While he lolls on cushioned seat.
But when he 's out for holiday
To scour the hedge and thicket,
Alone he drives the roan and gray —
The good old-fashioned ticket.

August 31, 1883

THE INDIAN AND THE TROUT

THE morning sun in splendor shone
On the mellow park of the Yellowstone.
The President at the break of day
Had packed his duds and moved away.
A brave Shoshone chief came out
With his willow pole to fish for trout.
It was half-past six when he cast his line,
And he kept on fishing till half-past nine;
And then he baited his hook anew
And patiently fished until half-past two —
The meanwhile swearing a powerful sight
For fishing all day with nary a bite.
And he swore and fished, and fished and swore
Till his Elgin watch tolled half-past four;
When a big, fat trout came swimming by
And winked at the chief with his cold, sad eye.

"And do you reckon, you pagan soul,
You can catch us trout with a willow pole?
The President taught us manners while
He fished for us in the latest style.
You 've no idea how proud we feel
To be jerked ashore with a Frankfort reel!"

The red man gathered his dinner-pail
And started home by the shortest trail,
And he told his faithful squaw he guess'd
They 'd better move still farther west,
Where presidents did n't come fooling about,
Turning the heads of the giddy trout.

September 5, 1883

A PLAY ON WORDS

(TO BE READ ALOUD RAPIDLY)

ASSERT ten Barren love day made
Dan woo'd her hart buy nigh tan day;
Butt wen knee begged she 'd marry hymn,
The crewel bell may dancer neigh.
Lo atter fee tin vein he side
Ant holder office offal pane —
A lasses mown touched knot terse sole —
His grown was sever awl Lynn vane.

" Owe, beam my bride, my deer, rye prey,
And here mice size beef ore rye dye;
Oak caste mean knot tin scorn neigh way —
Yew are the apple love me nigh! "
She herd Dan new we truly spoke.
Key was of noble berth, and bread
Tool lofty mean and hie renown,
The air too grate testates, 't was head.

"Ewe wood due bettor, sir," she bald,
"Took court sum mother girl, lie wean —
Ewer knot mice stile, lisle never share
The thrown domestic azure quean!"
"'T is dun, no farebutt Scilly won —
Aisle waiste know father size on the!"
Oft tooth the nay bring porte tea flue
And through himself into the see.

September 12, 1883

HOW FLAHERTY KEPT THE BRIDGE

OUT spake Horatius Flaherty,—a Fenian
bold was he,—
"Lo, I will stand at thy right hand and turn
the bridge with thee!
So ring the bell, O'Grady, and clear the rail-
way track—
Muldoon will heed the summons well and
keep the street-cars back."

Forthwith O'Grady rang the bell, and
straightway from afar
There came a rush of humankind and over-
loaded car.
"Back, back! a schooner cometh," the brave
O'Grady cried;
"She cometh from Muskegon, packed down
with horn and hide."

And "Back!" Muldoon demanded and
Flaherty declaimed,
While many a man stopped short his course
and muttered, "I 'll be blamed!"
And many a horse-car jolted, and many a
driver swore,
As the tother gangway of the bridge swung
off from either shore.
And bold Horatius Flaherty a storm of curses
heard,
But pushing bravely at his key, he answered
not a word;
And round and round he turned the bridge
to let the schooner through,
And round and round and round again
O'Grady turned it too;
Till now at last the way is clear, and with a
sullen toot
'Twixt bridge and shore, ten rods or more,
the tug and schooner shoot.

"Now swing her round the tother way,"
the brave O'Grady cried.
"'T is well!" Horatius Flaherty in thunder
tones replied.

Muldoon waved high his club in air, his
handkerchief waved high,
To see the stanch Muskegon ship go sail-
ing calmly by;
And as the rafters of the bridge swung round
to either shore,
Vast was the noise of men and boys and
street-cars passing o'er.
And Flaherty quoth proudly, as he mopped
his sweaty brow,
"Well done for you, and here 's a chew,
O'Grady, for you now."

September 19, 1883

THE THREE-CENT STAMP

GOOD-BY, old stamp; it 's nasty luck
That ends our friendship so.
When others failed, you gamely stuck,
But now you 've got to go.
So here 's a flood of honest tears,
And here 's an honest sigh.
Good-by, old friend of many years —
Good-by, old stamp, good-by!

Your life has been a varied one,
With curious phases fraught —
Sometimes a check, sometimes a dun,
Your daily coming brought;
Smiles to a waiting lover's face,
Tears to a mother's eye,
Or joy or pain to every place —
Good-by, old stamp, good-by!

You bravely toiled, and better men
  Will vouch for what I say;
Although you have been licked, 't was when
  Your face turned t' other way.
'T was often in a box you got
  (As you will not deny)
For going through the mails, I wot—
  Good-by, old stamp, good-by!

Ah, in your last expiring breath
  The tale of years is heard—
The sound of voices hushed in death,
  A mother's dying word,
A maiden's answer, soft and sweet,
  A wife's regretful sigh,
The patter of a baby's feet—
  Good-by, old stamp, good-by!

What wonder, then, that at this time
  When you and I must part,
I should aspire to speak in rhyme
  The promptings of my heart?
Go, bide with all those mem'ries dear
  That live when others die;
You 've nobly served your purpose here—
  Good-by, old stamp, good-by!

September 24, 1883

BIG THURSDAY

IN this week's history of the Fair,
To-day will be the banner day.
The commonwealth will all be there
To view the truly grand display.
The country folk from miles around
Will gather in this monstrous hive,
And will in wondering groups be found
Where pigs and cows and squashes thrive.

The rural bumpkin and his gal
Will proudly note the Lima bean
And golden pumpkin from La Salle,
The sweet potato from Moline,
The toothsome cheese from Kankakee,
The turnip bred in Kickapoo;
And squashes fair and round we 'll see
From Crete and Big Foot Prairie, too.

Or, fancying live stock, they will ponder
  On blooded cattle by the drove —
Sleek Berkshire bullocks from Golconda,
  And Durham swine from Downer's Grove;
On gentle Southdown mules from Pana,
  On Poland China sheep from Niles,
On calves from Buda and Urbana,
  And likewise cows in divers styles.

Unhappy, most unhappy being
  Who thinks to stay away from there —
Who misses all such sights worth seeing
  At and around our glorious Fair!
So don, O youth, your paper collar,
  And prink your best, O maiden gay,
A ticket costs but half a dollar —
  Go join the multitude to-day!

September 27, 1883

Much in a Name

It transpires that Mme. Janauschek's name, translated from the Bohemian into pure Anglo-Saxon, is Johnson. One can more fully appreciate the richness and ripeness of the change when he contemplates the possibility—the ridiculous possibility—of the burly old lexicographer's having been known to posterity as Dr. Samuel Janauschek.

August 22, 1882

Count Bozenta's Possibilities

Mr. Charles Bozenta's address delivered night before last before the Polish societies of this city was a scholarly, thoughtful effort.

In some respects Bozenta reminds one very forcibly of Carl Schurz: he is a scholar and a thinker, and, in spite of his bad accent, is an agreeable, rapid, entertaining, and instructive talker. He has all of Schurz's vagary, combativeness, wit, and cynicism, with much more sociability and heartiness, and a much keener appetite for the smaller details of every subject he investigates. Bozenta has a fondness for politics, and after he has conducted his wife, Mme. Modjeska, through her farewell season, it need not surprise anybody to hear of him as bobbing up serenely in the troubled sea of California politics.

September 14, 1883

After Michael Angelo

Henry E. Dixey tells a story to the effect that John Stetson once went behind the scenes in his New York theatre and found fault with a certain piece of scenery then in use. "What is the blamed thing, anyway?" he asked. The stage-manager informed him that it was a scene after Michael Angelo, whereupon Stetson pompously exclaimed: "Well, it 's no good. Pay Mike his salary

and let him go!" A day or two afterward Dixey was reciting the incident to Jack Haverly, but Haverly did n't seem to catch on to the joke. So Dixey repeated the yarn, and Haverly, forcing a property smile, exclaimed: "Oh, yes, I see—there ain't no such person as Angelo!" This amused Dixey more than the original story, and he hurried off to tell Stetson about it. But Stetson was quite as thick-witted as Haverly had been in detecting the humor of the thing. "Why, don't you see," exclaimed Dixey, with great earnestness, "I told this yarn to Haverly, and he replied, 'There ain't no such person as Michael Angelo'!" "Ah, yes," cried Stetson, with a sudden gleam of intelligence; "he ought to have said, 'There is n't any such person as Michael Angelo'! Yes, yes; a good one on Haverly! Ha, ha, ha!"

August 12, 1884

Stuart Robson in a Serious Rôle

Says Mr. W. H. Crane, the comedian: "Very few people are aware that my friend and partner Mr. Stuart Robson once conceived the notion that he was created for the

interpretation of the romantic drama. This was in 1840. Robson had acquired a deserved reputation for his comedy powers, but he cherished a burning ambition to figure in more heroic parts. This ambition was encouraged by numerous Baltimore friends, who assured Mr. Robson that he was infinitely better qualified for romantic rôles than many other actors who were high in public favor. The upshot of all this agitation was that Robson got together a splendid company, hired the old Holliday Street Theatre in Baltimore, had the event properly advertised, and made his appearance as Claude Melnotte in 'The Lady of Lyons.' The theatre was packed to overflowing, and the public seemed determined to give Robson all the encouragement at its disposal. His appearance was the signal for rapturous applause, and he got through the first act in fine shape. His friends were overjoyed. 'We told you so,' said they; 'this young man has leaped already to the front of the profession.' But in the second act Mr. Robson began to weaken, and when he came to his love-scene with Pauline he felt all the

divine afflatus leave him, and he began to wilt and droop, pine and falter, till finally he broke down completely and stood like one in a semi-comatose condition. The pause was unspeakably painful, but at last Mr. Robson seemed to recover his self-possession, for he came to the front of the stage, bowed to the audience, and said: 'Ladies and gentlemen, I find the rôle of Claude Melnotte a leetle too hefty for me, and, with your kind permission, I will substitute therefor the beautiful sentimental ballad "I would not Die in Springtime."' I was telling this story," continues Mr. Crane, "to John Stetson once upon a time, and when I got through with it Stetson exclaimed, with earnest solemnity: 'Now, do you know, Crane, that is a damned beautiful song, all the same!'"

October 25, 1884

Qualifications for the Stage

"I HAVE just arrived from England, and want to join your company."

"Have you the catarrh?"

"Yes; a case of twelve years' standing."

"Good; and have you deserted your wife and family?"

"Yes; they will be here next month to claim a divorce and alimony. The amount of good the scandal—"

"Hush—say no more; you are engaged."

December 31, 1884

A Comedian's Legs

We regard Mr. Francis Wilson's legs as the greatest curiosities on the American stage at the present time. We call them curiosities when perhaps we should term them prodigies. The truth is, they are so versatile, so changeful, that we hardly know what epithet could be applied to them most properly. They are twins, yet totally unlike, reminding one of a well-mated man and wife, who are so very different that we speak of them as well matched. The left leg is apparently of a serious turn, as may be observed on all occasions requiring a portrayal of those emotions which bespeak elevated thought and philosophic tendencies. The right leg is mercurial, obliquitous, passionate to a marked degree, whimsical, fan-

tastic, and grotesque. The contrast between the two gives us a comedy in itself which is very pleasing, for the constant struggle between the perennial levity of the right leg and the melancholy demeanor of the left leg is funnier by far than most of the horse-play which passes for comedy in these times.

While one with sad emotion throbs
And wildly palpitates,
The other makes its grievous sobs
And loudly cachinnates.
While this one jigs along the floor,
Intent on noisy pleasure,
The other treads the carpet o'er
In many a stately measure.

The combination is a happy one. The left leg pleases the serious-minded, the sentimental, and the lovers of the emotional style of the dramatic art; the right leg solaces those who believe there is nothing more enjoyable than mirth. Here we find two legs capable of every variety of action. They can shake you out a jig or stride you a minuet; they can sob plaintively or titter hysterically; they can strut imperiously or wobble ludicrously; they can suggest a

spondaic pentameter of the best old classic poets, or a bit of modern doggerel from *Puck*. Their name is Versatility, and in them we find all the passions clearly defined and deftly combined.

June 13, 1885

Mortifying Discovery of "Oliver Optic"

A MODEST, quiet, benevolent-looking old gentleman was sitting in the rotunda of the Tremont House yesterday, when he heard a stranger seated near by make the remark that he believed he would try to see Sol Smith Russell in the evening.

"Excuse me, sir," said the old gentleman to the stranger, "but that is a wise determination. Mr. Russell is one of the greatest comedians of the present time. I know of no actor who possesses such extraordinary histrionic talents."

"Oh, thunderation!" replied the stranger. "I 've seen Sol Smith Russell once afore, an' hearin' he had a new play, I sort o' calculated I 'd dodge in an' catch on. Mighty peert chap, that Sol!"

"And he is as clever personally as he is

professionally," said the old gentleman, warming up. "His New England training and associations have gone a long way toward stimulating in his bosom those virtues which, alas! are too infrequently met with in theatrical life nowadays. And, pray, may I ask where you saw him last?"

"Well, the last time I seen Sol," replied the stranger, "was at Milwaukee about a year ago. He was settin' in the Plankinton House behind three of the biggest jacks ever showed down."

"I don't know that I understand you," said the old gentleman. "What was the play?"

"Three of a kind," said the stranger, "and a mighty good play it was, too."

"Comedy?" asked the old gentleman.

"Waal, no—leastwise not for the rest of us fellers," said the stranger. "We kind o' reckoned as how it was tragedy when we saw him rakin' in the pot."

"Gee-whillikins!" cried the old gentleman, as his white hair raised up and his benevolent face stretched out about a yard long, "you don't mean to tell me that my boy—that my Sol—plays cards!"

"Your boy—your Sol?" repeated the stranger. "Say, look-a here, stranger, who be you, anyway?"

"Who am I?" gasped the old gentleman. "Why, I 'm Mr. Adams, otherwise known as 'Oliver Optic,' and I 'm Sol Smith Russell's father-in-law!"

December 9, 1885

Salvini in Polyglot Drama

When Dennis Malley came out of McVicker's Theatre night before last, between acts, he said to Colonel Tom Geary, the Cerberus at the door: "Wall, Oi 'll be dommed ef that is n't the quare-est piece Oi 've iver sane." "How so?" asked Colonel Geary. "The dommed naygur is the bist one in the hull crowd," replied Mr. Malley.

Yet we presume to say that Mr. Malley's appreciation of "Othello" as given by the Salvini company was not very different from the appreciation which the rest of the audience manifested. We noticed that a good many of the ladies present carried bouquets that looked like young asparagus beds, and that quite a number of the gentlemen were

rigged out with spike-tail coats, and collars that chafed their jaws; we noticed that these persons applauded vociferously whenever the Dagos in the gallery gave the cue—that they smiled approvingly on one another and bore an expression of comfort and self-gratulation, as if, forsooth, they were mighty glad they could afford to patronize an entertainment which called for two dollars a seat. But none of these persons wore upon his or her physiognomy that intelligent expression which invariably bespeaks an understanding of what it is all about. To their credit be it said that very few attempted to simulate the understanding they had not.

Mr. Salvini is a great actor and a great artist; he has a magnificent physique, a noble voice, and a splendid intellect. In certain lines he is simply incomparable. But we do not wonder that his performances are not generally popular in this country. He plays his parts in Italian, his company play their parts in English. Could anything in a dramatic way be more preposterous?

To the lover of good round English the Italian language is the most namby-pamby

in the world; it is the vernacular of tenor singers; it is composed of five vowels, waxed mustaches, and shiny silk trunks; its literature has come to consist of the measly librettos of a dying operatic school.

What lover of English does not revolt against the translation of Shakspere's tragedies into Italian as a profanation? What have these bastard Latin tongues—the Italian, French, *et id genus omne*—to do with Shakspere? What a mockery it is to hear Hamlet called "monsieur," Ophelia addressed as "signorita," and Desdemona talking of her father as "papa"!

During the performance of "The Gladiator" last Monday night we heard Roman matrons—the most austere representatives of the feminine sex we know of—addressed as "signoras." We would as soon think of calling an Italian brigand a dude!

But there are humorous features about these Salvini entertainments which partly compensate us for this other desecration. For instance, the dialogue of a Salvini tragedy impresses the average auditor much as the

subjoined dialogue will impress you, gentle reader:

VIOLA ALLEN. You sent for me, me lord?

SALVINI (*gloomily*). Si, signora.

VIOLA ALLEN. Wherefore, I prithee, tell me?

SALVINI (*seizing her by the arm*). Questa infelice grazzio guglielmo si giacomo puella leustra!

VIOLA ALLEN (*deprecatingly*). Oh, me lord!

SALVINI (*with suppressed rage*). Sospiro, ah! m'appari—questa adagio banana rodrigo piano?

VIOLA ALLEN (*eagerly*). On me soul, I know not!

SALVINI (*glaring at her*). Che la morte sostenuto miserere piazza milano presto patti?

VIOLA ALLEN (*shuddering*). Me lord, you amaze me!

SALVINI (*dragging her to L. U. E.*). Sperato hernani guestato habani viglio genoa colombo guesta grazzia nouvello!

VIOLA ALLEN. Oh!

SALVINI. Descendo, crescendo et diminuendo piano-forte!

VIOLA ALLEN. With a dagger, me lord?

SALVINI. Fortissimo.

VIOLA ALLEN. When the pale moon shines on yon pallid copse?

SALVINI (*frowningly and hoarsely*). Lazzaroni pianissimo!

VIOLA ALLEN. Heaven's will be done! But what if he bear it not hither?

SALVINI (*raising his sword on high*). Questa padre nouvello bella donna trovatore. Signora! che la mezza?

VIOLA ALLEN. Yes, my lord.

SALVINI. Si?

VIOLA ALLEN. Yes.

SALVINI (*approvingly*). Si. (*Exeunt.*)

By this fair sample of a Salvini play it can be seen that a man with a fertile imagination can derive a large amount of satisfaction from the Dago drama if he is willing to pay for the pleasing experiment.

January 14, 1886

Stuart Robson's Politics

THE election of Mr. Stuart Robson as an honorary member of the Cook County Democratic Club will serve to remind the

public that this popular comedian is one of the bitterest of partisans. His father was one of the most extensive slave-owners in Maryland. Naturally, therefore, Robson has always been a Democrat, and he glories in the fact that his first vote was cast for Andrew Jackson. Mr. William H. Crane, on the other hand, is a rabid Republican, and it is a wonderful coincidence that it should have been his father, the Rev. Moses Dickinson, who, as far back as 1826, harbored and protected in his home at Penobscot, Maine, three of the slaves who had fled from bondage on the Robson terrapin plantation near Baltimore.

September 26, 1886

The Perennial Miss Lotta

THERE is playing in Chicago at the present time one of the most charming little actresses it has been our good fortune to see and hear. A great many years ago, when we were much more impressionable than now, it was our pleasure to see this delightful creature's mother in the very same rôle in which the beautiful and gifted Lotta is

charming the Chicago public this week. At that remote period we were satisfied that never before had human eyes beheld so fair, so graceful, and so vivacious a wee bit of femininity, and that never until her voice was heard had human ears been ravished by such heavenly tones. Yet now we are compelled to admit that the daughter is even more comely, more graceful, and more vivacious than her mother, the popular idol of other days. Petite, frolicsome, joyous, this delicious morceau of human sunshine dances and carols and laughs her way right into our hearts, and there she riots, sweet iconoclast that she is, tearing down the images set up there, and enthroning herself as the one queen regnant.

Footlight favorites come and go; they live and move and have their being, and then they are forgotten, or, at least, they are put aside for some other new favorite. The public is called very fickle, but perhaps this seeming fickleness is not, after all, so much the fault of the public. In this little lady, Lotta, we have one of those singularly fascinating and lovable characters of which

the public never wearies. This merry sprite, who combines with all the mirth, the grace, and the art of her maternal predecessor a personal beauty essentially her own, this tuneful little fairy, who manipulates with subtle sorcery our lachrymal glands and our cachinnatory organs, will dance on and sing on, and keep us always laughing and weeping at her sweet will. She appeals to all alike—the young, the old, the grave, the gay, the rich, the poor, the lowly, the proud: all own the spell of little Lotta's fascinations, and all surrender to it cheerfully.

We hear of others who are called queens of the dudes, of some who appeal to the intellectual only; in short, there are very many specialists in this great profession of the drama, but little Lotta is everybody's favorite. It is right that she should be so, for what is there worth loving if it be not the incarnation of girlhood, innocence, and vivacity? So, like the brook, her popularity will go on forever, and when we give this as an opinion we wish it to be distinctly understood that our wish is father to the thought.

September 22, 1886

The Mystery of Pasadene

Our gifted and genial friend Mr. William J. Florence, the comedian, takes to verse as naturally as a canvasback duck takes to celery sauce. As a balladist he has few equals and no superior, and when it comes to weaving compliments to the gentler sex he is without a peer. We find in the New York *Mirror* the latest verses from Mr. Florence's pen; they are entitled "Pasadene," and the first stanza flows in this wise:

> I 've journeyed east, I 've journeyed west,
> And fair Italia's fields I 've seen;
> But I declare
> None can compare
> With thee, my rose-crowned Pasadene.

Following this introduction come five stanzas heaping even more glowing compliments upon this Miss Pasadene, whoever she may be—we know her not. They are handsome compliments, beautifully phrased, yet they give us the heartache, for we know Mrs. Florence, and it grieves us to see her husband dribbling away his superb intellect

in penning verses to other women. Yet we think we understand it all: these poets have a pretty way of hymning the virtues of their wives under divers aliases. So, catching the afflatus of the genial actor-poet's muse, we would answer:

Come, now, who is this Pasadene
That such a whirl of praises warrants?
And is a rose
Her only clo'es?
Oh, fie upon you, Billy Florence!

Ah, no; that 's your poetic way
Of turning loose your rhythmic torrents.
This Pasadene
Is not your queen—
We know you know we know it, Florence!

So sing your song of women-folks;
We 'll read without the least abhorrence,
Because we know
Through weal and woe
Your queen is Mrs. Billy Florence!

January 3, 1887

Was H. C. Barnabee a Poet?

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, March 9.

TO THE EDITOR: I have read with great interest the many complimentary references

you have made from time to time to Colonel H. C. Barnabee, the famous humorist of the Boston Ideal Opera Company. I am a great admirer of that gifted gentleman, but never having had the honor of an introduction to him, I have found it impossible to gratify my curiosity upon a certain question which has vexed me for a long time. In my father's library there was a small volume entitled "Barnabee's Journal," printed under date of 1818 (London). My father used to peruse this book with great relish, and many a time have I heard the old gentleman laugh heartily over a certain poem printed therein and entitled "The Sabbath-Breaker; or, Murder Revenged." As nearly as I can recall, the poem was as follows:

A Presbyterian cat sat watching of her prey,
And in the house
She caught a mouse
Upon the Sabbath day.

The minister, offended at such a deed profane,
Threw by his book;
The cat he took,
And bound her in a chain.

"Thou damn'd, confounded creature and blood-sucker,"
says he,
"And wouldst thou throw
To hell below
My holy house and me?

"Thou well mayst be assur'd thou blood for blood shalt
pay
That in thy strife
Took Mouse's life
Upon the Sabbath day!"

Oh, then he took his Bible book, and earnestly he prayed
That the great sin
The cat was in
Might not on him be laid.

To death they bore Grimalkin, the cause of that alarm,
And on a tree
Well hang'd was she,
While Pres John sang a psalm.

Since the act of Puritan and they that bear such sway,
Clear not your house
Of louse or mouse
Upon the Sabbath day.

You will agree with me, I think, that this is a very funny poem; now, will you please tell me whether or not old Barnabee is the author of it? If you answer in the affirma-

tive I shall enjoy his operatic performances more than ever hereafter.

Yours truly,
EBEN NESMITH.

It is not probable that Colonel Barnabee wrote the poem above quoted. The lines are to be found in a magazine printed in London many years before the publication of "Barnabee's Journal": 1740 was the date, we think, and our Colonel Barnabee was not alive then. The Barnabee who wrote the ballad in question was presumably one of the colonel's ancestors, and we venture to say that the colonel has paid to the memory of that ancestor the tribute of many a blush; for the ballad is a satire on the sect among whom Colonel Barnabee was reared and by whom were inculcated into his expanding nature the glorious spiritual truths which have been to him in his life's journey a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

March 10, 1887

A Felicitous Toast

"MAY your shadow never grow less," was the singularly felicitous toast which

Major M. P. Handy, president of the Clover Club, proposed to Miss Sarah Bernhardt at a Philadelphia banquet the other evening.

April 7, 1887

The American Who Discovered Bernhardt

Colonel Horace Rublee, the able editor of the Milwaukee *Sentinel*, is to be the guest of Miss Sarah Bernhardt in this city next week. The friendship between the two has been of long duration and had a curious beginning. It was while Colonel Rublee was United States minister to Switzerland that he visited Paris for the first time. Being then a young and enterprising man, he explored the French metropolis thoroughly, and one evening he happened to attend a performance at the Théâtre de Haut Monde, one of the very many variety halls in which Paris abounded at that time. It was here that he first saw and heard Sarah Bernhardt, then a mere girl, doing the song-and-dance business. But the weird beauty and subtle grace of the young Jewess impressed the sagacious diplomatist so strongly that he determined to interest himself in her behalf.

In a few days he had set her case before the American minister, and through the influence of that official secured an audience with the director of the Comédie Française, who finally consented to give the girl a trial in the rôle of Phèdre. From that day up to the present time Bernhardt has trod a flowery path to glory, and it is vastly to her credit that she has never forgotten the kindness done by her good friend "Monsieur le Colonnel," as she calls him. To a reporter of the New York *Times* she said last week: "Wizout Monsieur le Colonnel vaire leetle good would my airt to do; he find me in ze song-an'dance, and he say, 'Saira, you air one—what you call him—one daisie.' Ozzer men see me zen, but zey nevaire say me to be one daisie. Monsieur le Colonnel knows one daisie when he see him, and zat is ze grand plaisere to be one daisie."

April 21, 1887

"*Froufrou*" *in Chicago*

The Bernhardt engagement has brought out all the French scholars in Chicago. Never before had we suspected that there

were so many able linguists in the midst of us. General Stiles, we have just discovered, speaks French like a native of Paris (Vermilion County). He attended the "Froufrou" performance last evening with his friend Judge Prendergast. The judge is a proficient Greek and Latin scholar, but he knows little of French, his vocabulary being limited to such phrases as "fo par," "liaison," "kelky shoze," and "olly bonnur"; so General Stiles had to explain the play to him as it progressed last evening.

"Now what is she saying?" the judge would ask.

"She said 'Good evening,'" the general would answer.

"Does 'bung swor' mean 'good evening'?" the judge would inquire.

"Yes."

"Oh, what rot!" the judge would exclaim, and then a dude usher in one of Willoughby & Hill's nineteen-dollar dress-suits would teeter down the aisle and warn the gentlemen not to whisper so loud.

Presently Colonel William Penn Nixon, the gifted editor of the *Inter-Ocean*, came

along and slipped into the seat next to General Stiles. He had an opera-glass, and he levelled it at once at Bernhardt's red red hair.

"Do you speak French?" asked General Stiles, in the confidential tone of a member of the Citizens' Committee.

"Oony poo," said Colonel Nixon, guardedly.

"Vooley-voo donny moy voter ver de lopera?" asked the general, motioning toward the opera-glass.

"See nay perzoon ver de lopera," protested the colonel. "Say lay zhoomels."

"Mong doo! What do I want of zhoomels?" cried General Stiles. "Zhoomels is twins."

"Parbloo!" said Colonel Nixon, "it is not twins; it is opera-glasses."

"You 're all wrong, William," urged the general. "The French idiom is 'the glass of the opera.' *Ver* is 'glass,' and *de lopéra* is 'of the opera.'"

"I have heard them called lornyets," suggested Judge Prendergast, in the deferential tone of a young barrister seeking a change of venue.

"Well, I don't know what the general's opera-glass is," said Colonel Nixon, "but this one of mine is a lay zhoomels."

"Call it what you please," replied the judge; "it is der tro, as far as I am concerned, until the corpse de bally makes its ontray."

"I thought you did n't speak French," said General Stiles, turning fiercely upon the judge.

"Oh, well," the judge explained apologetically, "I 'm not what you and the colonel would call oh fay,—I 'm a june primmer at the business,—but when the wind is southerly I reckon I can tell a grizet from a garsong."

Chicago society is still in considerable doubt as to where Bernhardt should be located in the artistic scale. A good many of the élite think that her Fédora is second to Fanny Davenport's, and there are very many others who prefer Clara Morris's Camille. We notice that the popular inquiry in cultured circles is, "Have you been to see Bernhardt?" not, "Have you been to hear Bernhardt?"

"Oh, you don't know how I enjoyed Bayernhayerdt the other evening!" exclaimed one of our most beautiful and accomplished belles. "Her dresses are beautiful, and they do say she is dreadfully naughty!"

April 29, 1887

Only Fit for the Stage

Sol Smith Russell tells of how he was travelling on Long Island some seasons ago, doing his monologue in town halls and church basements. At the railway station in one of these little eel-catching communities a native, rusty and hoary, sat on a freight-truck and accosted the comedian with: "Be you Mr. Russle?"

"Yes, that 's my name," answered Sol.

"Waal, I thought so," said the native. "I seen yeow up to the teown hall las' night, an'—waal, you 're a good 'un!"

"Oh, thank you," said Sol; "I 'm glad you like the entertainment."

"Since I come away," resumed the native, "I 've been thinkin' that mebbe you might do sumpin' fer my boy—good, likely critter as ever lived, but so pesky full of his

gimcracks that we can't do nuthin' with him. Put him in a shingle-factory last spreng fer to l'arn the trade, but he kep' 'em all laffin' so that they could n't do no work, an' one mornin' they threw him out, an' he hain't doin' nuthin' neow. Settin' up to your show las' night, I jest about made up my mind that Rube would make a mighty good livin' in your business, and I thought I 'd ask you to take him along with you. He 's the gol-durnedest fool you ever see in all your born days."

The ex-Rev. George C. Miln once had a similar experience out in Nebraska City. He was playing "The Fool's Revenge," and he noticed that one old lady sitting well down in front was fearfully agitated. She sobbed and wept like a child. Mr. Miln knew he was a pretty powerful actor, but he had never suspected that he had it in him to exercise so terrific a control over another's emotions. He sent word down to the old lady that he 'd like to talk with her after the play. So the old lady waited. When Mr. Miln had exchanged his stage toggery for civilized raiment he stepped

down into the parquet and greeted the old lady cordially.

"My acting moved you?" he suggested in his deepest and most soothing tones.

"Lor's sakes alive!" said she, "I should raythor say it did. I 've got a son who 's an actor in Cheyenne, and it broke me all up to think that mebbe he was n't no better at actin' than you be."

May 2, 1888

The Minister and the Actor

FRANCIS WILSON, the actor, and the Rev. Dr. Francis M. Bristol, heir apparent to a Methodist bishopric, are great friends. The bond which holds them together is the passion which they have in common, the dear, delightful passion of bibliomania. Whenever Dr. Bristol goes to New York he visits Mr. Wilson, and the twain discuss Elzevirs and Mazarins and Groliers and crankisms of that character to their hearts' content. On the other hand, when Mr. Wilson comes to Chicago most of his spare time is spent in the study back of Dr. Bristol's church, where, for the nonce, with musty tomes and

rare copperplates around them, they forget all about theology and the drama, and become absorbed in that everlasting bibliomania discussion.

It happened early last summer that the two friends met in Omaha. Dr. Bristol was there as a delegate to the Methodist conference. Mr. Wilson was there with his comic-opera company. Both gentlemen did a big week's business.

"Now is the time for you to come to one of my performances," said Mr. Wilson one day.

"Oh, no; that would never do," answered Dr. Bristol. "I never was in a theatre in all my life, and I could n't conscientiously go now."

"But I 've been to hear you," argued Mr. Wilson; "surely you should come to hear me!"

The clergyman shook his head and set his teeth firmly. His friend and he never before had discussed the relations of pulpit and stage; their talk hitherto had been, as above intimated, confined to such subjects as Groliers, Mazarins, and Elzevirs. The

tie that bound their hearts in kindred love was bibliomania. It was reserved—unhappy fate!—it was reserved for them to put a first strain upon their cordial relations when they met far from their quiet homes, in the strange, wild, unkempt city of Omaha.

To make short of a long story, the clergyman and the actor had a fair, square talk upon the subject which had hitherto been avoided by both. Mr. Wilson stood up for his profession, of course, and in the course of his elaborate argument he said: "I try to make my fellow-men happy, and so do you. Now, I claim that my efforts are more successful than yours. For two hours every night I am before the public, and people go away happy. Many of these same people go to hear you twice a week, and with what result? They come away miserable as ——!"

Do you think that the free interchange of practical theological opinions between the clergyman and the actor interrupted the old-time *entente cordiale?* Not a bit of it. They had their argument, and that was the end of it. And to strengthen their friendship they

exchanged gifts before parting. Mr. Wilson presented Dr. Bristol with a rare old octavo first edition of Collier's "The Prophaneness of the English Stage," and Dr. Bristol presented Mr. Wilson with an equally rare old first edition of William Prynne's "Of the Unloveliness of Love-Locks."

September 10, 1892

The President Rebukes "Joe" Jefferson

Mr. William Crane, the comedian, is somewhat of a fisherman himself, but he yields the palm to Grover Cleveland. "I never saw a man," says Dr. Crane, "who has the passion for angling and the patience at it that Cleveland has. He does n't seem to care whether he catches any fish or not; he 'll sit for hours under a broiling sun, watching his bob go dancing in the water, and never utter a complaint if he does n't get a nibble. I went out several times with him last summer—Joe Jefferson took us out. Joe is n't any sort of a fisherman; he 's a great actor and a great painter and all that kind of thing, but he can't fish a little bit. Joe can't bait a hook, seems to be

afraid of the worms; so Cleveland and I took turns of putting bait on his hook. Joe got restless before we had been out half an hour; he kept wanting to move around—was sure that it was better fishing on the other side of the pond. Perhaps you 've been fishing with that sort of a man. It worried Cleveland a good deal, and by and by says he, 'Joe,' says he, 'when I was a small boy I went fishing with my uncle Elihu, and I remember that he told me that one of the secrets of success in life was to stick to the place where you 'd thrown your anchor out. Too many folks, said Uncle Elihu, spent all their time pulling up anchors and rowing around; they don't catch the fish. As for me,' said Cleveland, 'when I start in to fish,' says he, 'I sit right there and fish until either the pond runs dry or the horn blows for supper.'"

September 29, 1892

When Robson Shed Real Tears

When Lawrence Barrett's daughter was married, Stuart Robson sent a check for five thousand dollars to the bridegroom. Miss

Felicia Robson, who attended the wedding, conveyed the gift.

"Felicia," said her father, upon her return, "did you give him the check?"

"Yes, father," answered the dutiful daughter.

"What did he say?" asked Robson.

"He did n't say anything," replied Miss Felicia, "but he shed tears."

"How long did he cry?"

"Why, father, I did n't time him; I should say, however, that he wept fully a minute."

"Fully a minute!" roared Robson. "Why, I cried an hour after I 'd signed it!"

May 12, 1893

A Surfeit of Realism

Nat Goodwin tells a story of a tramp who, upon being asked to undertake the task of eating thirty quails in thirty days, pathetically exclaimed: "Make it turkeys!"

In the experience of Mr. James A. Herne with his play of "Shore Acres" we have an instance wherein a number of people have eaten turkey once a day for the last eighteen months. In one scene of this realistic drama

a turkey is cooked and eaten upon the stage, and this scene never fails to make a hit with the spectators, many of whom (and particularly the gods in the gallery) actually begrudge the participants in that savory meal the steaming viands so temptingly spread out before them. But Mr. Herne and his associates no longer sing the praises of turkey. There was a time when that national bird stood high in their favor, but having eaten steadily of turkey for eighteen months, there is no other viand so odious to them as is this same once prized and pampered fowl.

"Even those holidays which are hailed with delight by other good people," says Mr. Herne, "are anticipated by us with wretched forebodings, simply because we know that with them will come a universal renaissance of the bird which has been our principal article of daily diet for weary months. We have grown so desperate that we really should like to rub Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's, and other winter holidays out of the calendar."

Ten days ago the veteran manager J. H.

McVicker gave Mr. Herne a splendid dinner. When the pièce de résistance was ushered in, lo and behold, it was a turkey—a magnificent bird, and done to the queen's taste, but still a turkey. Mr. McVicker detected the look of subdued horror on his guest's face, and all at once the absurdity of the situation dawned upon him.

"My dear," said he to Mrs. McVicker, "it has just occurred to me that Mr. Herne would much prefer a cut of that cold roast beef which was left over from dinner last evening."

Last Sunday Mr. Franklin H. Head entertained a number of professional people, and among them was Mr. Herne. There was a splendid dinner, and the crowning glory thereof was a turkey, a noble twenty-four-pounder, browned to a crisp and reeking with delectable juices.

"Why do you shudder?" asked Mr. Head of Mr. Herne, for his Argus eyes detected his guest's emotion.

Mr. Herne politely denied that he had shuddered, and he tried to laugh a cheery laugh and to look happy; but Hamlin Gar-

land gave the secret away, and there was any amount of fun at poor Herne's expense.

This, we take it, is one of the penalties of realism. As long as Mr. Herne stuck to pure romance he was a sleek, contented man. He did not suffer from a glut of turkey, because he could n't afford to. Ever since he became a veritist he has been so prosperous that he has had to pay the penalty of prosperity, which in this particular instance has been an oversupply of that which to the average man is properly accounted the most appetizing and most satisfying of edibles.

February 20, 1895

A NIGHTMARE

(CAUSED BY FAILURE TO DIGEST A BLANKET-SHEET)

DID I dream? Was 't a fancy
Of weird necromancy
That mingled the living with shades of the dead?
Was 't a deep meditation,
Or hallucination
Provoked by a paper I had but just read?

Blanket-sheet editor
Sat in his den,
With his yardstick and tape-measure,
Paste-pot and pen,
When there came to the doorway
And stood in a row

The spirits of Shakspere
  Of Addison, Poe,
And a multitude more
  Of the same brainy school;
And one in clown's raiment -
  A poor verbose fool.

"So you 're looking for places?"
  The editor said.
Each shade in his turn
  Gave a nod of the head.
"How much can you write
  In the course of a day?"
The spirits proceeded
  Their work to display.

One had written a sonnet
  Of usual length;
Another a paragraph
  Towering in strength;
Still another romanced
  In sensational strain —
Every thought a rare gem
  From a procreant brain.

Then forth from his bag
  The poor, motley clown brought
A haymow of words
  With a needle of thought;
And the editor measured
  Them all with his rule,
And dismissed every spirit
  Save that of the fool.

October 3, 1883

BACHELOR HALL

IT seems like a dream — that sweet wooing of old —
Like a legend of fairies on pages of gold —
Too soon the sweet story of loving was closed,
Too rudely awakened the soul that reposed;
I kissed the white lips that lay under the pall,
And crept back to you, lonely Bachelor Hall.

Mine eyes have grown dim and my hair has turned white,
But my heart beats as warmly and gayly to-night
As in days that are gone and years that are fled —
Though I fill up my flagon and drink to the dead;

For over my senses sweet memories fall,
And the dead is come back to old Bachelor Hall.

I see her fair face through a vapor of tears,
And her sweet voice comes back o'er the desert of years,
And I hear, oh, so gently, the promises she spoke,
And a soft, spirit hand soothes the heart that is broke;
So I fill up the flagon, and drink — that is all —
To the dead and the dying of Bachelor Hall.

October 5, 1883

HUMAN NATURE

A BEGGAR-MAN crept to my side
One bitter, wintry time;
"I want to buy a drink," he cried;
"Please give me, sir, a dime."
If he had craved this boon forlorn
To buy his family meat,
I had passed on in silent scorn,
And left him in the street.

I tossed the money in his hand,
And quoth: "As o'er your wine
Within the tippling-room you stand
Drink thou to me and mine."
He let an earnest "Thank ye" drop —
Then up the street he sped,
And rushed into a baker's shop,
And bought a loaf of bread!

I know not why it was, and yet,
So sudden was the blow,
I felt emotions of regret
That he had duped me so.
Yet, had the hungry beggar said
That he was sore in need
Of that necessity called "bread,"
What man would pay him heed?

October 10, 1883

A VERY WEARY ACTOR

AMBER clouds on a cobalt sky,
The hour for work is drawing nigh!

An all-night journey, an aching head,
A longing to strike and go to bed!

Not a friend to greet or a friend to meet,
A lonely room on a noisy street.

A silent meal in a crowded room,
A silent smoke in a cloud of gloom.

A scene rehearsed, a stammering crew,
Letters received, and more work to do.

Business bothers, intrigues, and war;
The future a blank, the present a bore.

A cup of strong tea, a smoke, and I 'd better
Screw up my courage, and seek the theatre.

Dress for an hour in a cell that is stifling,
And then play a part with a heart — but I 'm
trifling.

(Attributed to) RICHARD MANSFIELD.

October 25, 1883

GETTYSBURG

YOU wore the blue and I the gray
On this historic field;
And all throughout the dreadful fray
We felt our muscles steeled
For deeds which men may never know,
Nor page of history ever show.

My father, sir, with soul to dare,
Throughout the day and night,
Stood on old Little Round Top there,
And watched the changeful fight,
And, with a hoarse, inspiring cry,
Held up the stars and bars on high.

At last the flag went down, and then —
Ah, you can guess the rest —

I never saw his face again.
  My father's loyal breast
Is strewn with these sweet flow'rs, I wot,
That seem to love this sacred spot.

The smoke of battle 's cleared away,
  And all its hatreds, too;
And as I clasp your hand to-day,
  O man who wore the blue,
On yonder hill I seem to see
My father smiling down on me.

October 27, 1883

HER FAIRY FEET

"BRING me a tiny mouse's skin,"
The boisterous tanner cried;
"It must be as a rose-leaf thin
And scarce three fingers wide."

He seized the fragile, tiny bit
Within his brawny hand,
And cast it in the seething pit,
And so the skin was tann'd.

Then came a cobbler to his side
With tools that cobblers use,
And deft they wrought that mouse's hide
Into a pair of shoes.

"Tell me," I asked, "O cobbler, tell
For whom these morceaux be?"
"A lover bade me build them well
For his true love," quoth he.

"Where dwells this maid with fairy
feet?"
In wonderment I cried;
The old man shifted in his seat—
"Chicago," he replied.

October 29, 1883

THE REMORSEFUL CAKES

A LITTLE boy named Thomas ate
Hot buckwheat cakes for tea —
A very rash proceeding, as
We presently shall see.

He went to bed at eight o'clock,
As all good children do,
But scarce had closed his little eyes,
When he most restless grew.

He flopped on this side, then on that,
Then keeled upon his head,
And covered all at once each spot
Of his wee trundle-bed.

He wrapped one leg around his waist
And t' other round his ear,
While mamma wondered what on earth
Could ail her little dear.

But sound he slept, and as he slept
  He dreamt an awful dream
Of being spanked with hickory slabs
  Without the power to scream.

He dreamt a great big lion came
  And ripped and raved and roared —
While on his breast two furious bulls
  In mortal combat gored.

He dreamt he heard the flop of wings
  Within the chimney-flue —
And down there crawled, to gnaw his ears,
  An awful bugaboo!

When Thomas rose next morn, his face
  Was pallid as a sheet;
"I nevermore," he firmly said,
  "Will cakes for supper eat!"

November 6, 1883

A PATRIOT'S TRIUMPH

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS met a lad
As down the street he hied.
"Pray tell me, boy, if eke you can,
Where Schurz doth now reside."
"In sooth I can, my gentle sir,"
The honest lad replied;
"Proceed due north and soon you 'll come
To where he doth abide."

"You speak some words I ken not of,"
George William Curtis cried;
"Now tell in speech non-sectional
Where doth my friend reside.
I know not north — Schurz knows no south;
Such terms do ill betide.
The north is south — the south is north —
The west the east, beside."

"Good sir, you jest," complained the youth,
And hung his fuddled head.
"Nay, foolish boy, I speak the truth,"
George William Curtis said;
"Lo, from the south the north wind blows
And eke the rising tide,
That splashes on our eastern shores,
Laves all the western side.

"The snows do fall on southern soil
And on the prairies wide;
The cotton on the northern hills
Is now the Yankee's pride.
There is no north — there is no south —
These terms have long since died;
So tell in reconstructed speech
Where now doth Schurz reside."

"Good master, turn ye to the west,
And on the eastern side
Adown the northern path, due south,
Two blocks he doth abide."
George William Curtis missed his way,
But still it gave him joy
To know our land had gained that day
A reconstructed boy.

November 7, 1883

"YOURS FRATERNALLY"

AN editor in Kankakee
  Once falling in a burning passion
With a vexatious rival, he
  Wrote him a letter in this fashion:
"You are an ass uncouth and rude,
  And will be one eternally."
Then, in an absent-minded mood,
  He signed it, "Yours fraternally."

November 9, 1883

SONG OF THE ALL-WOOL SHIRT

MY father bought an undershirt
Of bright and flaming red —
"All wool, I 'm ready to assert,
Fleece-dyed," the merchant said;
"Your size is thirty-eight, I think;
A forty you should get,
Since all-wool goods are bound to shrink
A trifle when they 're wet."

That shirt two weeks my father wore —
Two washings, that was all;
From forty down to thirty-four
It shrank like leaf in fall.
I wore it then a day or two,
But when 't was washed again
My wife said, "Now 't will only do
For little brother Ben."

A fortnight Ben squeezed into it;
  At last he said it hurt.
We put it on our babe — the fit
  Was good as any shirt.
We ne'er will wash it more while yet
  We see its flickering light,
For if again that shirt is wet
  'T will vanish from our sight.

December 6, 1883

OF BLESSED MEMORY

I OFTEN wonder mother loves to creep
Up to the garret where a cupboard stands,
And sit upon the musty floor and weep,
Holding a baby's dresses in her hands.

I often wonder grandma loves to sit
Alone where hangs a picture on the wall—
A handsome face across whose features flit
The phantoms of a love she would recall.

I wonder, too, that sister, pale and sad,
Waits at the gate, and, waiting, seems to hear
The footfalls of the brave, heroic lad
Who nevermore may woo her waiting there.

ENVOY

The little lips in voiceless death are sealed;
The haughty squire seeks now a lasting sleep;
The lover's bones bleach on a battle-field —
And broken-hearted women live to weep.

December 11, 1883

A LEAP-YEAR EPISODE

CAN I forget that winter night
In eighteen eighty-four,
When Nellie, charming little sprite,
Came tapping at the door?
"Good evening, miss," I, blushing, said,
For in my heart I knew —
And, knowing, hung my pretty head —
That Nellie came to woo.

She clasped my big red hand, and fell
Adown upon her knees,
And cried: "You know I love you well,
So be my husband, please!"
And then she swore she 'd ever be
A tender wife and true.
Ah, what delight it was to me
That Nellie came to woo!

She 'd lace my shoes, and darn my hose,
  And mend my shirts, she said;
And grease my comely Roman nose
  Each night on going to bed;
She 'd build the fires, and fetch the coal,
  And split the kindling, too.
Love's perjuries o'erwhelmed her soul
  When Nellie came to woo.

And as I, blushing, gave no check
  To her advances rash,
She twined her arms about my neck,
  And toyed with my mustache;
And then she pleaded for a kiss,
  While I — what could I do
But coyly yield me to that bliss
  When Nellie came to woo?

I am engaged, and proudly wear
  A gorgeous diamond ring,
And I shall wed my lover fair
  Sometime in gentle spring.
I face my doom without a sigh;
  And so, forsooth, would you,
If you but loved as fond as I,
  And Nellie came to woo.

December 22, 1883

THE DÉBUTANTE

HAVE you got the jellies made, mother?
Are the sandwiches *au fait?*
Are the salads wrought and the wine all
bought
For the splurge on New Year's day?
You look serene as a regnant queen,
But there 'll be some hitch, I fear,
For I 'm to receive this year, mother—
I 'm to receive this year.

My dress is such a daisy, mother,
What wonder if I am vain?
'T is a white piqué, décolleté,
With a princesse skirt, en train.
That 's why I yearn and impatient burn
For the splurge that is, oh, so near,
For I 'm to receive this year, mother—
I 'm to receive this year.

Jack says he will come at ten, mother,
And tarry the rest of the day.
Why turn up your nose? You don't suppose
He 'd dare to stay away?
Though Jack is proud and hates a crowd,
I 'm certain he will be here,
For I 'm to receive this year, mother —
I 'm to receive this year.

So call me at half-past eight, mother —
Don't let me sleep till nine.
I 've crimped my hair, and over the chair
I 've thrown my dresses fine;
At half-past eight — now don't be late —
Come early, O mother dear,
For I 'm to receive this year, mother —
I 'm to receive this year.

December 27, 1883

OF DIET AND DYSPEPSIA

Origin of the Word "Hash"

PROFESSOR BUTLER of Milwaukee says the cooks of ancient Athens had a fashionable dish that they called "lopadotemachoselachogaleokranioleipsanodrinupotunmatrsilphioparasmelitokechumenokichleipikossuphophattoperisteraiekruonoptekephaillokingklopeliollagooshirairobaphetraganopterugon." We have it from private sources that this name was discontinued by royal order soon after Theseus took the throne. It happened in this wise: When Theseus came back from his bull-fight with the Minotaur he naturally strolled into a restaurant in the basement of the Pantheon and asked for a plate of the fashionable dish. Before the

waiter had time to pronounce the word the king was almost starved to death. He had just strength enough left to draw his ante-stylographic pen from his vest pocket and write a royal order in these words: "Henceforth and forever let lopadotemach-etc. be called hash, under penalty of death." The order has never been revoked.

February 25, 1884

Ye Plainte of a Dyspeptic

Dyspepsia is a thankless malady. No matter how wretchedly the victim feels, he gets no sympathy whatsoever. The hand of the world is against him, as if, instead of being a worthy sufferer, he were a veritable Ishmaelite. Even his doctor laughs him to scorn.

"Well, what have you been doing now?" the doctor asks. "What have you been eating?" The callous scoffer knows very well, perhaps, that his miserable patient has not eaten a blessed thing within ten days. Yet the doctors have fallen in with the popular heresy that the best way to sympathize with a dyspeptic is to rail at him.

When you have dyspepsia every man you meet asks you to go to lunch with him; every house you pass is a restaurant; every gale that blows wafts to your nostrils the odor of ham and eggs; every newspaper is full of domestic recipes; every wagon in the street is loaded with spring chickens or dressed hogs (ough!) or fresh berries. The only sign you can see is "Dinner now ready" or "Supper only fifteen cents." Why, even the beggars who waylay you importune you for pennies with which to buy "something to eat." It would be a pleasure to do an act of charity once in a while, but why do the beggars never importune for money with which to buy pepsin or lactopeptin or a Sedlitz-powder?

Dyspepsia never kills, they say; yes, that's the sneaking villany of the malady—it thwarts every high purpose and every ambition, and compels its prey to dodder and mope through life in a condition of perennial consciousness of his weakness and of his helplessness. We do not agree with those who say that it necessarily sours its victim—that may be its diabolical pur-

pose, but we do not think it always succeeds. On the contrary, we think that it very often serves to soften the temper, to broaden and to deepen the sympathies, and to instil into the heart a sweeter and nobler charity. Physical discipline, however rigorous, serves the grand purpose of chastening the soul; it is one kind of sorrow, and sorrow is good for humanity. A very interesting essay upon this subject was written many years ago by Bulwer-Lytton; it would repay invalids, we think, to read that essay occasionally. We regard it as one of the great man's best bits of work.

Dyspepsia, if humored properly by long and circumspect fastings, occasionally gives its victim a season of rest, and during these seasons, whensoever they occur, it behooves the dyspeptic to improve his opportunity. Hot mince pie with melted cheese—ah, there is a dish that will compensate you for weeks of torture! Another glorious viand is Nesselrode pudding. This is a cross between ice-cream and the Spanish Inquisition; it is of a decomposed hue, and it is full of candied fruits, nightmares, Arabian perfumes, pun-

gent flavors, ecstatic sapidities, etc. Then, again, there is nothing the matter (if we may be pardoned the slang phrase) with a Welsh rarebit, yet the banqueter should insist upon having a nice overdone, indigestible poached egg served with the rarebit.

But we shall—we can go no further; it makes the mouth water, the palate yearn, and the heart throb to think of these precious boons, and even in the midst of stomachic paroxysms we feel constrained, like old Louis XI., to plead indulgence not only for the sins we have committed, but also for the sins which we hope to have the pleasure of committing by and by—we regret that we cannot fix the exact date.

June 18, 1889

The English Mince Pie

THE last of the Thanksgiving mince pie is gone; its end was as mysterious and portentous as its beginning and its career. I refer, of course, to the London mince pie, the occult conglomeration which we were beguiled into buying last November, while we labored under the delusion that to buy a

mince pie was the patriotic thing for an American to do.

I remember the day distinctly; it was one of those cheerful, typical, frosty, suicidal days in which this London climate abounds. We were sitting in a drawing-room in the Quadrant. The slavey had just replenished the grate fire, and Colonel Reid, Cowen, Harry Dam, Tom Fielders, and I, as superb a quintet of dyspeptics as ever discussed high food and hot biscuits, gathered around the hearthstone and gazed into the flickering flames and talked about Thanksgiving dinner. It was agreed that turkey should be the pièce de résistance, and we rejoiced to hear Tom Fielders say that he had heard Ralph Meeker tell somebody else that Leigh Lynch had told him that genuine American cranberries could be bought at a shop under Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly. With turkey and genuine cranberry sauce we should be happy, and with that combination we should have been satisfied. But in an unlucky moment I ventured the suggestion that without a mince pie to symmetrize it no Thanksgiving dinner could be complete. A profound grunt of ap-

proval all around assured me that I had the sympathy of the entire community.

"And I know where mince pies can be bought," said Harry Dam. "I understand that there is but one caterer's in town where satisfaction is guaranteed. That is Buszard's in Oxford Street."

"I do not know that I particularly fancy that name," remarked Colonel Reid. "Buszard is a significant, not to say an ominous, name; as one who has always been loyal to the eagle, I object to Buszard." "But really, colonel," expostulated Tom Fielders, "Buszard is the swell caterer of London; for years he has pandered to the royal household and to the nobility, and his shop is regarded hereabouts as the Mecca for all in quest of sapid, succulent, and savory viands. If anybody can make a mince pie, Buszard can."

The result of the talk was that we all became highly enthusiastic on the subject of Buszard's mince pies, and when Cowen and I left the cheerful bachelor chambers we proceeded forthwith to Buszard's shop, a somewhat pretentious shop in Oxford Street, just off Regent. The show-windows were

filled with divers-colored confections, the tables were covered with truculent-looking puddings and cakes, and the atmosphere was laden with a perfume as of boiling maple sap.

It was our misfortune to fall into the clutches of a sallow-faced young man wearing a checkered suit of clothes, a dark-red necktie, and a head of coarse black hair larded down with odoriferous bear's grease—one of those garrulous young chappies who know it all and tell more. He assured us that "we" could make a mince pie—he called it "poy"; he knew what a genuine American mince pie was, had often made them for Americans, and would guarantee entire satisfaction. Miserable dupes that we were, we trusted the loquacious cockney. How much would a pie, a genuine American mince pie with real apples and real meat in it, cost us? We were somewhat startled when he answered half a guinea. We told him that this was simple extortion; nay, the equivalent of two dollars and sixty-five cents for a mince pie was unadulterated robbery! Why, in Potter Palmer's conscienceless res-

taurant in Chicago the finest native mince pie cost only one dollar, and that included melted cheese on top, and a genuine Senegambian prince at the side to serve it on hot plates. We rebelled against half a guinea as a man would take up arms against the iron heel of oppression. The garrulous young cockney then said that "we" would consult with the manager, and he disappeared through a swinging door, only to return presently to announce sententiously that seven and six was the very, very lowest price for which the pie could be provided. Fancying that we could do no better, we paid the low-browed robber that amount of money and bade him send the pie to our lodgings upon Thanksgiving afternoon, not later than three o'clock, Greenwich time.

At the appointed hour, surely enough, the goods (you see I speak cautiously) were delivered in an oblong box, which, upon examination, was found to contain a dish, and in the dish was the pie, or rather a pie, still warm. The dish was oval in shape, ten inches long and four inches in depth.

I asked the servant if she knew what it was.

"Yes, sir; it 's a Yorkshire pudding," said she.

"Put it away," said I.

Billy Knox and J. L. Sclanders, old newspaper co-workers from Chicago, dined with us.

"Now, boys," said I, at last, "I 've got a surprise for you"; and the servant produced the pie—Buszard's mince "poy."

"I thought we were going to have mince pie," said Cowen.

"So we are," said I.

"Ah, it 's to come later?"

"No; this is it."

"That is n't a mince pie," expostulated Cowen; "that 's a pudding. Nobody ever saw a mince pie made in a bowl!"

"But it is a mince pie," I insisted. "The leading London caterer made it; it must be good."

I served the pie liberally. I did not dare eat any myself, for the doctor had forbidden that sort of thing. Then, too, on Thanksgiving day one can afford to be

princely even in doling out pie at seven and six.

The pie had a thick double crust (by which I mean an upper and lower crust), and between these crusts (*id est, supra et infra*) lay a black mass of lovely indigestible matter that smelled like a barber's shop. Three inches of mince meat, think of it, ye housewives of my beloved native land.

I felt indignant when I saw that our guests did not devour the viand with voracity. I knew that the pie was good; it must be good, it had to be good, at seven and six.

"I think you must be mistaken about this," said my friend Knox, cautiously. "I have eaten mince pie all my life,—mince pie in the sacred groves of the Des Plaines, mince pie in the academic shades of Evanston, mince pie in the black-jack thickets of Egypt, and mince pie in the subterranean recesses of the Boston Oyster-house,—but never, no, never before have I tasted mince pie like this mince pie. As I figure it, without prejudice, this is more like a fruit pudding."

My friend Sclanders said that upon one

occasion, while he was a student in Munich, he had seen and partaken of a dish that quite resembled this particular dish; as he recollected, it was called Splutterungenleischlied-gehabten. As for my old chum, Cowen, he had done (with every possible variation) all the territory between Buenavista, Colorado, and Vienna, Austria, and he had never before met up with mince pie the like of this mince pie.

To make a long story short, what was left of Buszard's mince pie was set away in a corner of the cupboard, and Buszard's name was frequently but not felicitously mentioned.

In some way or other it got noised about that we had a genuine American mince pie in the house, and forthwith the Americans began to flock in upon us from every side. Ralph Meeker and his wife were among the first. Having had dyspepsia twenty years, Ralph was a mince-pie virtuoso. He just looked at our mince pie, and said: "That 's no pie; that 's a Scotch bun."

J. P. Andrews of Grand Rapids, Michigan, went so far as to taste it, and for weeks and

weeks afterward he said he felt as if he had a slab of verd-antique marble in his stomach.

M. E. Stone tried it, and then (just like him) he posted off to Scotland Yard and hired a gang of detectives to find some clew as to what it was.

John C. New took a piece of it to his office with him and used it for a paper-weight. Will Eaton thought that the substratum of the pie looked a good deal like the vein of a coal-mine he once owned out in Iowa. And so, in one way and another, they all heaped contumely and obloquy upon that pie—that mince pie for which I had paid Buszard seven and six.

Once—now, this is a confession that I have never made before—once, I say, I arose in the middle of the night and stole to the cupboard and partook of that swarthy pie. I was curious to determine for myself whether the pie merited all this ribald abuse, and whether a serious injustice were not being done to Buszard. The result of my investigation was complimentary neither to the pie nor to its compounder. We then went back to bed,—the piece of pie and I,—and in

dreams I saw a gaunt figure rise from a dark corner and approach me with the words: "At last, son-in-law, I have thee in my power." Next morning we arose,—that piece of pie and I,—and I was pale, exhausted, trembling. We kept company many moons. Had it not been for my wife, a most frugal soul, I should have thrown the remnants of the pie away, but my wife represented that it would be wicked to indulge in such extravagance. As it was, I did upon one occasion cast some bits of the pie to the sparrows that clustered, shiveringly and appealingly, upon the rail of the window balcony. It was pathetic to see each hungry little creature hop down and pick up a crumb of the pie and hold it in his mouth and roll his eyes back and think; then sneeze, drop the crumb, and fly away, never to return.

A week ago last Sunday the dolorous tones of a hand-organ came up from the street below. A poor woman, wretchedly clad, was grinding out the melancholy tune of "Shall We Gather at the River?" It was a dreary, raw, chilly day. The woman looked pinched and hungry. Her husband,

as ill clad as she, was wandering from house to house, beseeching pennies.

"My dear," said I to wife, "would it not be wise to give the rest of our mince pie to this poor woman, who is perhaps the mother of starving little ones?"

That finish caught my wife. "Of course," said she. "I knew we'd put the pie to some good use if we only kept it till the proper time came."

So I gathered up the remnants of the pie and carried them down-stairs to the poor woman. The squalid creature seized them eagerly and gulped them down with the ferocity of a famished wolf. "Grazia, signore!" I heard her say, as I walked away. Her eyes were full of the tears of gratitude. I felt that I had done a worthy deed.

A few days later I chanced to meet Professor Robert Aylmer, a distinguished chemist from Boston. He told me that a friend of his (Colonel John C. Reid) had sent him for chemical analysis a specimen of English mince pie, taken from a mince pie compounded by one Crow, an eminent London baker.

"You mean Buszard," said I.

"That may have been the name," said the professor. "At any rate, I analyzed the specimen, and found it a curious compound, quite unlike our American mince pie. The constituent parts of this composition were, as I remember, as follows:

Lemon peel	10	Green figs	2
Orange peel	10	Brussels sprouts	10
Citron	5	Prunes	3
Pineapple rind	15	Epps' Cocoa	2
Almonds	2	Scotch whisky	3
Caraway seeds	8	Stilton cheese	5
Cocoanut	5	Pears' Soap	20
		Total	100

There was a slight trace of Thames water, but I deemed it hardly sufficient to be noticed. Altogether the compound is a baleful one—as deadly, I think, as the breath of the vampire or the shade of the upas. I have sent a specimen to Professor Pasteur, in order that he may apply the biologic test, to determine if there be in it a germ likely to induce an epidemic."

So much for the scientific view of American mince pie as concocted by Buszard, the

swell caterer of London. I am no scientist; I am simply a modest chronicler of passing events.

Last Sunday I sat in this same chair, here in these humble lodgings, when suddenly came up from the street below the voice of that old, dolorous tune, "Shall We Gather at the River?"

"It is the poor swart daughter of Italy," I sighed; "she has come back gaunt and hungry. I would that I had food for her."

Overflowing as to my heart with pity, I went to the window and looked down at the sorry wretch grinding that wheezy organ. It was the husband, tattered and wan and shivering. He was alone, and upon his left arm he wore a rude strip of black crape.

February 22, 1890

Reflections on Carlsbad

Die Verdauungsschwäche is the most ferocious malady known to man. It is feline in its cruelty. It seldom kills. It pounces upon, it cripples, and it plays with its victim, revelling in his misery, delighting in his

groans. Sometimes it steals away and hides. You think it has forgotten you; you flatter yourself that you are no longer its slave. Wretched creature, miserable dupe that you are, you smile and you are gay. In another moment and with redoubled malignity die Verdauungsschwäche has its talons about your throat and its beak in your vitals. It is a terror whose presence bids defiance alike to life and to death. This monster has one surpassing foe, one adversary whose supremacy it concedes and yields unto. That foe is Carlsbad.

And what is Carlsbad, and for what is it so potent and so famed?

Carlsbad is a spot. It is a streak between hills in Bohemia. An ancient tradition says that it was discovered by a dog. That dog is now dead. Hence has arisen the saying, "They tried it on the dog."

The people of Bohemia are known the world over as wanderers. They are necessarily tramps, because they cannot afford to live at home. It is cheaper to move. Carlsbad was the last created spot on earth. It was made up of what was left over. It

rains in Carlsbad six sevenths of the time. It is the most watery watering-place on earth. The essentials to a successful career over there are a wallet and an umbrella, both big. It is a good place for disease, doctors, and ducks. People who go to Carlsbad may be sick of anything. When they go away they are sick of nothing but Carlsbad. The coming and the going illustrate respectively the comparative and superlative degrees of joy. Carlsbad is constructed like the intestine of a sand-hill crane. It has an alimentary canal running straight through it. Everything else in Carlsbad is crooked.

The native of Carlsbad has four hands, with ten fingers to each hand. Other people go to Carlsbad for their health, but the native is not there for that purpose. If you take your eyes off him you are gone. Button up your coat and put your hands in your pocket while you talk with him. Make him sign and swear to every proposition he makes. He has got you anyway, but do not walk into the trap with your eyes shut. Put yourself into a position to be able to say honestly that you knew it all the time.

Every house in Carlsbad is a hostelry, and a bad one. Some may be classed as larcenies, others as highway robberies. The only difference is the degree of the crime. It is a tradition that once upon a time the Goths and Vandals, tempted by rumors of the exceeding riches of Carlsbad hotel-keepers, made an incursion, but contrived to get away without losing much.

From America there are many routes to Carlsbad. But there are only two return routes, one the northern and the other the southern route. You swim home by one and skate home by the other. The marshy character of the soil between Europe and America renders walking impracticable. The portier is one who poses at the entrance of every hotel and bows as you go out or come in. He speaks fluently every language except your language. Your language he speaks a leedle. For bowing to you and for speaking your language a leedle you have to pay the portier a florin a week. He also has the prerogative and inalienable right to charge you two kreutzers for every newspaper that comes to you by post.

If you kick he will simply put a snaffle on you.

The fish that swim in Carlsbad creeks have many names, but they are one. If you eat him as the trout, you pay one florin; if as the sole, seventy-five kreutzers; if as the zander, fifty kreutzers. You choose the name and pay the money.

The doctor is autocrat in Carlsbad. What he says must go. If you fare ill he says it is because you are not obeying his orders; if you fare well he says, "I knew it would be so." When he assures you that you are making weight you must take it for granted that if the scales tell you differently the scales lie. At any rate, you may depend upon it that the doctor will not suffer you to leave Carlsbad until your wallet, at least, has been reduced in heft.

Then he will send you to Switzerland. That 's where the Alps are; they are very high, but they are not so high as things are in Carlsbad.

The waters in Carlsbad are warm, which, though watery, is not warm. When the water and die Verdauungsschwäche meet

within you they are both somewhat surprised. And, for that matter, so are you. Both water and Verdauungsschwäche seem to fear one another. They strike a truce. The water goes its way, and so does die Verdauungsschwäche.

But this truce is only temporary. Before the storm the calm; peace precedes war.

After a week of respectful quiet there is trouble. The water and die Verdauungsschwäche fall to quarrelling, and you are the field of battle, the dead, the dying, and the wounded. Sometimes the water temporarily succeeds and plays triumphal marches through your system. Anon die Verdauungsschwäche achieves the mastery and celebrates with pyrotechnics and brass-band music through your vitals.

This sort of thing continues ten days. It is merely a question of time whether die Verdauungsschwäche or you succumb first. This is why he who survives Carlsbad is vulgarly called a blood of the first water. In Carlsbad alone does die Verdauungsschwäche meet its Waterloo.

August 16, 1890

How Job Suffered from Dyspepsia

By those who know whereof they speak it is admitted that of all the maladies wherewith man is afflicted there is none more grievous in its torments than dyspepsia, and a right marvellous characteristic of this affliction is that with all its malice it seldom wholly destroys its victim. Dyspepsia very often incapacitates a man for endeavor, and it sometimes extinguishes the fire of ambition within him; but it is the diabolical pleasure of this disease not to deprive its miserable prey altogether of life, and so we see dyspeptics crawling aimlessly about the world, too sick to live as they should live, yet not quite sick enough to die. The lot of these creatures is wretched indeed.

Dyspepsia is the oldest malady known to mankind. The oldest piece of literature—and perhaps the oldest poem ever written—treats of the career of a dyspeptic, his physical and mental symptoms, his curious hallucinations, his reformatory life, his gradual restoration to life, his subsequent prosperity, and his wondrous longevity. We refer to

the Book of Job, to the reading, nay, to the study of which we urge those who are aware that they have stomachs and those, also, who are likely to become so aware. The first important lesson which this beautiful poem teaches is that Satan invented dyspepsia. The arch-fiend makes his boast that it is in his power to win Job from godliness by afflicting him sorely in body. Divinity permits the trial to be made, but insists that the victim shall not be killed, so Satan invents dyspepsia, as we shall—or, rather, as the poem itself doth—prove.

Job was, as you recall, a high liver. He lived in the land of Uz (the Hebrew for "us" or "ours"). He had been exceeding prosperous in life; his flocks and herds were mighty, he was rich, his domestic relations were most felicitous—he was, in short, a successful man. And he was a high liver. Almost at the beginning of the poem we are told of feastings and merrymakings. To this Divinity did not object; by the same benevolence that bestows good things upon mankind it would seem to be ordained that mankind should enjoy those good things.

It is only when Satan interferes that the office of digesting and assimilating these good things becomes a vain, unprofitable, accursed office, productive of physical torments and mental anguish and spiritual pains. Wherefore should all men, particularly dyspeptics, hate the devil and eschew every practice wherein it is known or even suspected that that most odious and most malignant spirit delights.

The first dyspeptic symptom exhibited in the case of Job was a nervous one, viz., an apprehension of evil. We are told that he conceived the idea that his children had died, that his flocks, herds, and servants had either been destroyed or carried away, and that his fortune had suddenly escaped him. The poet does not assure us that these things actually befell; on the contrary, he seeks to convey the impression, as subtly as the methods of Oriental rhetoric will permit, that these were merely hallucinations, and just such tormenting hallucinations as the neurasthenic dyspeptic is liable to. The symptom exhibited is an eczema, unpleasant to a degree, but by no

means dangerous; the translators of the Old Testament have chosen to call this eruption boils, but in the light of advanced medical science we confidently pronounce it hives, or, as the British faculty prefer, nettle-rash. So vexatious is this eruption that Job, unquestionably broken by the mental distresses already spoken of, lapses into a condition verging upon melancholia. He becomes moody; he casts aside his rich raiment and shuns the society in which he had been wont to find enjoyment. He seems to fear association with his fellow-men; this is what is called anthropophobia, and it is clearly a neurasthenic symptom.

In the midst of his anguish the sufferer curses the day wherein he was born. This is invariably a common practice with dyspeptics, and in it the cunning artifice of Satan appears. Yet the teaching of the ages is that however much the dyspeptic may regret his birth, he is hasty to avail himself of everything conducive to longevity. Quite naturally, therefore, Job spread the news of his ill health, and doubtless experienced a melancholy delight when he beheld his three

old cronies with him. Immediately, after the manner of dyspeptics, Job began to lament his wretched lot and to enumerate his symptoms and pains. "My sighing cometh before I eat," says he, "and my roarings are poured out like the waters." The probability is that Job did not use this exact phraseology; it is more likely that the poet employed this graceful phrasing to convey the information that flatulency was one of the aged valetudinarian's most distressing symptoms. When Eliphaz seeks to soothe the old gentleman, Job suddenly becomes suspicious and wonders why these people have come to see him; for this is one of the vagaries of nervous dyspepsia. "Am I a sea," he asks, "or a whale, that thou settest a watch over me?"

So he goes on complaining and confessing. Now and again he exhibits a certain valorous optimism, but quite as frequently a bitter pessimism tinges his utterances—so fluctuating are the emotions of the neurasthenic. He is troubled with insomnia: "When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise, and the night be gone? and I am full of

tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day" (vii. 4). He has awful dreams: "When I say, My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint; then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions (vii. 13, 14). He suffers from shortness of breath and from water-brash: "He will not suffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterness" (ix. 18). He complains of lassitude (xvi. 7.) and speaks of his wrinkled visage and of "my leanness" (xvi. 8), which would seem to argue a certain anæmic condition. Then, again, he has a bad taste in his mouth (xvii. 1), and his vision is temporarily impaired (xvii. 7); his thoughts are scattered, and he has lost all power to concentrate them (xvii. 11). That he is threatened with a disagreeable complication in the nature of stomatitis is suggested by his words, "I am escaped with the skin of my teeth" (xix. 20); for the teeth have no skin except when, in stomatitis, the gums drop down over them. He has nervous rigors, for, as he says, "trembling taketh hold on my flesh" (xxi. 6). He has fantastic hallucinations: "I am a brother to

dragons, and a companion to owls" (xxx. 29). He exhibits febrile symptoms: "My skin is black upon me, and my bones are burned with heat" (xxx. 30).

The mistakes that Job made appear to have been two. He erred first in an over-indulgence of his appetite. Then he erred in not summoning a good doctor as soon as he felt sick. The leech, in those times, was not, it is true, a skilful body, but surely one with the least professional experience would have diagnosed Job's malady at once and set the sufferer on the way to recovery. As it was, however, Job had the good luck to fall into a manner of living which assured his cure. He got down to hard-pan at once. He forsook all feasts and merrymakings; he bowed himself (metaphorically) in sackcloth and ashes. He took no medicine—that could not help him. He simply went back to first and primeval principles, and that was what cured him. Curiously enough, there is no other cure for dyspepsia to-day.

In Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite the poet has ingeniously drawn the characteristics of

three classes of human beings who make a practice of worrying dyspeptics with their consolation and advice. The first class reproaches the sufferer for his past life: the wretched man has brought it all on himself; he should not complain; he should prepare for death. The second class insists that there is nothing in it at all: the dyspeptic thinks he is sick when he is n't; it is all the work of the imagination; by simply getting up and going about his business as usual he would soon forget all about his fancied pains. As for the third class, it believes that the dyspeptic needs remedies, and it has thousands of them to recommend as the only safe, sure, and immediate cure. What wonder that dear old Job despised and cried out against these false comforters! What wonder that this immortal pioneer dyspeptic bade them hold their peace and let him alone! There was one sensible adviser; yes, and there are Elihus even unto this day, who in their modest, unobtrusive way go about doing good. He counselled Job wisely, soothing his impatience, quieting his fears, and encouraging him in his practice of

necessary abstemiousness. Then, better than all human things, God's voice spake to the wretched sufferer, and it bade him "be a man."

What was the end of it all? Why, Job got well, of course. His recovery was not accomplished in a day or a week or a month. No; it takes time to restore a debilitated system, particularly when Satan has once laid hold upon it and proselyted the stomach unto the pernicious pursuit of his wicked pleasure. But in due time and by means of the most scrupulous care and patience, involving a frugal diet and an outdoor life, Job got well. He awakened from the hideous dream. His wrinkles were all smoothed out; he was no longer bothered with insomnia or bad dreams; his pneumogastric nerve resumed its normal docility; all the distressing symptoms of heartburn and water-brash subsided; he gained in weight; his cheeks got rosy again; in his limbs he felt the vigor and elasticity of youth; his tongue became clean—in short, his digestion was perfect. Then he saw that his sons and daughters still lived—there are ten in all,

and the three girls are exceptionally bonny creatures, as we are told and as we believe. His flocks, herds, and servants were secure, and he found his finances undisturbed. You see, he had imagined vain things, but, bless you, he was n't responsible; it was the fault of his dyspepsia, and by that we mean the devil, for we have not found it necessary to refer to this noble old Hebraic poem to convince ourselves that dyspepsia is indeed simply Satan incarnate.

Still, as we have already intimated, we should urge upon all—and particularly upon anæmic and neurasthenic dyspeptics—to peruse with exceeding diligence that poem wherein the sorrows of Job are so beautifully and so freely set forth. Therein shall each sufferer find portrayed some symptom which he himself hath exhibited and others which, having read of, he shall duly experience, too. From this perusal there is much benefit to be had, for it shall teach temperance and faith in God to be the essentials to that condition which insureth a sound mind in a sound body. It shall show, moreover, and most clearly, that the severest of all

human pains come of the devil (and him alone), that essayeth thereby to lay hold upon the soul of man; for the devil is fain to believe that the quickest and surest way into a man's heart is by the palate, the œsophagus, the stomach, the colon, and the like et-ceteras of that man. But the devil is wrong, as usual, and we glory in the determination to cheat him of his calculation, which determination, sweet and gentle reader, share thou with us.

March 10, 1891

THE MODERN MARTYR

"ONLY an editor's wife," they say,
As she rides along in her proud coupé;
But they all confess that her face is fair,
That her form is lovely beyond compare,
That her robes are rich and her jewels rare,
That her heart is warm and her gold is free;
Yet "only an editor's wife" is she!

Do they envy her laces and silks so grand,
Or the diamonds she wears on her white
left hand,
Or the satin train that sweeps in her track,
Or the elegant three-ply sealskin sack
That gracefully covers her shapely back?
Or why do the people derisively cry
When "only an editor's wife" rides by?

Do they envy the palace where she abides,
Or the gilded coach in which she rides,
Or her yacht that sports with the lake's white
foam,
Or the troop of servants that go and come
To do her will in her regal home?
Do they envy her gold when they descry
That it 's "only an editor's wife" goes by?

They never think of the man who writes
Through the weary days and the darksome
nights,
To earn the ducats with which to pay
For the laces fine and the jewels gay,
And the robes en train and décolleté,
And the other trappings that greet the eye
When "only an editor's wife" sails by.

Oh, could they go to his working-place,
And see his furrowed and pallid face,
And know the grind of his daily life,—
How he freely encounters all toil and strife
To humor the whims of his petted wife,—
Methinks they would raise their plaudits high
When "only an editor's wife" rode by.

January 10, 1884

AN OHIO IDYL

O FATHERS all, reflect upon
The touching story and the fate
Of hapless Mr. Pendleton,
Who had a daughter and a gate.

Once said this Mr. Pendleton
To dapper little John McLean:
"Here, now, get off that gate, my son,
And don't come hanging round again!
You 're not their style, my daughters say;
Your visits do not bring them joy.
Get off the gate and run away—
Come, there 's a clever little boy!"

Then dapper little John McLean
Sought out another quiet street,
Where lived a certain Mr. Payne,
Who had a daughter young and sweet;

Engaging this enchanting miss
In many a twilight tête-à-tête,
He whiled away long hours of bliss
In swinging on the old man's gate.

Lo, some years after, Messrs. Payne
And Pendleton were candidates;
Then did the dapper John McLean
Recall the story of the gates.
He lent his vengeful nature to
Manipulations darkly deft—
And Mr. Payne pulled glibly through,
While Pendleton got badly left.

So, fathers all, reflect upon
The touching story and the fate
Of hapless Mr. Pendleton,
Who had a daughter and a gate.

January 15, 1884

A SCHERZO

ONE night the charming Gerster said,
"Now listen, colonel, to me:
I will not sing — I 'll quit instead —
Unless I 'm paid what 's due me.
I 'm mad to think that you should think
That I am such a greeny
To let you lavish all the chink
On Mrs. Nicolini!"

Then Mapleson in guileful vein
Protested he was busted;
And Gerster on the midnight train
Incontinently dusted.
Back to her babe in York she hied,—
This operatic charmer,—
And put all other rôles aside
For that of simple mamma.

But Mapleson, when she had fled,
  Forthwith began to worry;
The telegram he sent her said:
  "Come back, and please to hurry.
I 'll build a palace-car for you,
  And bear your tantrums meekly,
And pay your salary when it 's due —
  That is to say, tri-weekly."

So back to Mapleson went she
  As sweet as dripping honey,
And now is happy as can be
  Because she got her money.
When asked what caused the recent row
  They answer 't was the baby;
This fairy tale 's sufficient now
  To fool the public, maybe.

January 29, 1884

AN OHIO DITTY

MARY had a little lamb,
Down in Ohio state,
And, ere it grew to be a ram,
Most dismal was its fate.

Its fleece was long and white and full,
And Mary loved to shear
Her lamb for the amount of wool
It brought her twice a year.

But once, upon a summer's day,
She learned, to her dejection,
Her wool investment did n't pay —
And so she craved protection.

And then, with many a pleading word
And copious flow of tears,
She flew to genial Mr. Hurd
To set at rest her fears.

But Mr. Hurd in scorn did hold
Poor Mary and her kid,
And when their tale of woe was told
No kindly act he did.

In vain for help the maiden cried
Upon her bended knees.
"No tariff, girl," the man replied;
"Go, serve your lamb with peas!"

So Mary slew her little lamb—
As might have been expected,
For little lambs are n't worth a d—
When they are not protected.

January 28, 1884

A GOOD MAN'S SORROW

ABOU BEN HALSTEAD — may his tribe increase! —
Thinking one night to steal a sweet surcease
From office work, of which he 'd had a greed,
Called to his side his faithful Romeo Reed,
And quoth: "By Allah and his great horned spoon,
I will go home and sleep me until noon
If I can get a paragraph from you
To pull to-morrow's editorial through;
Now, mind you, one short paragraph will do!"

Good Romeo Reed inclined his reverend head —
"Ismillah robang!" ("Good enough!") he said;
And Halstead straightway hied himself to bed.

Abou Ben Halstead woke next day at nine,
And having quaffed, as is his wont, his wine,
Called for the paper, which he always read
Propped up by pillows in his regal bed.
He seized the sheet, and with an eager flout
He turned the mammoth paper inside out
To see what Romeo Reed had writ about.
Abou Ben Halstead's cheeks grew very red;
He frothed awhile, and stood upon his head;
His mournful eyes were all ablaze with fire,
His noble frame quaked with demoniac ire.
Lo! Romeo's paragraph filled up the page entire!

February 20, 1884

LAMENT OF A NEGLECTED BOSS

WITH not a faithful lackey nigh,
With all my vast resources spent,
I find myself enshrouded by
The winter of my discontent.
Gone are the hours of tranquil bliss
I fondly used to count mine own,
And I, at last, am come to this—
The running of a telephone!

Before I took this paltry thing
That keeps a-jingling all the day,
I was a most puissant king,
And most despotic was my sway.
Proud was my lot and proud my mien;
I sat upon a gilded throne
And bossed a radical machine
Where now I boss a telephone!

Pause, O ye countrymen of mine,
  And drop a sympathetic tear,
And carve to me this touching line:
  "Oh, what a falling off is here!"
Dear Riddleberger and Mahone,
  Grant sweet surcease unto my woe
By wafting through my telephone
  A fond, occasional hello!

March 17, 1884

ROMANCE OF A "CUSS-WORD"

BROAD expanse of shiny shirt-front,
Cuffs and collar white to match,
Overcoat with silken facing—
Just the rig to make a catch.

Pretty lady coming toward him;
He prepares to make a mash;
Meets a stumbling horse on crossing—
Mud flies o'er him with a splash!

Man who looked so sweet and gentle,
Like a little suckling lamb,
Now becomes a raving lion;
Girl goes by and hears him d—n.

Girl is shocked beyond expression —
  Thinks his language simply vile;
Yet believes that she can save him —
  Meets him next time with a smile.

Man apologizes bravely,
  Says his anger made him rash.
Girl replies it but convinced her
  He 's a man of proper dash.

They are married in November;
  Wife is over all her scare;
Says she thought him soft and sickish
  Till the day she heard him swear.

March 20, 1884

COLD CONSOLATION

I AM booming, brother, booming;
As the tide of time rolls on
Thou wilt see me higher looming
In thy pathway, dearest John.
But oh, brother, in thy sorrow
Turn thou not thy face away;
Be for me, dear John, to-morrow,
As for thee I am to-day.

I am booming, brother, booming;
See the tempest toss my plume;
See the friends about me grooming,
Grooming lovingly my boom.
Lose no time, nor stumble blindly
Into error, Brother John;
To my boom, I tell thee kindly,
Soon or late thou must catch on.

March 21, 1884

MR. HOLMAN'S FAREWELL

THE little boom they said was vain
Will strike them now as vainer,
Since you have got aboard the train
And started o'er the cactus plain,
O frail and fickle Dana!

For when you reach the marble halls
Of pagan Montezuma,
What ear will heed my piteous calls
Amid the havoc that appalls
A boom without a boomer?

Perhaps some charm of that proud place
Will swerve you from your duty —
Will tempt you to forget my face,
My artless ways and simple grace,
My modest Hoosier beauty.

If so it be, my face will haunt
  Your soul where'er you linger;
Within your ears I 'll breath a taunt,
Within your eyes I 'll ever flaunt
  My pale and bony finger.

Like amorous Dido am I left
  To torturesome reflection —
Deceived, cajoled, betrayed, bereft,
My trusting heart by anguish cleft —
  Though not without OBJECTION.

March 22, 1884

THE APRIL FOOL

FAIR was her young and girlish face,
Her lips were luscious red as wine;
Her willowy form betrayed a grace
That seemed to me to be divine.
One evening at the trysting-place
I asked this maiden to be mine.
Unhappy, thrice-unhappy youth
Was I to court the crushing blow;
But why delay the awful truth —
She April-fooled me years ago!

Filled with a ghastly, grim dismay
As kneeling at her feet I heard
This fair but cruel angel say
That last, unhappy, severing word,
I fluttered hopelessly away
Like some forlorn and stricken bird.

For years I played the cynic's part,
  For years I nursed my secret woe;
And this reflection galled my heart—
  She April-fooled me years ago!

But she is forty now, and fat,
  And vanished all her graces are:
And many a lusty, brawling brat
  Pulls at her skirts and calls her "ma,"
And I have information that
  Her horrid husband tends a bar.
And when I see that fleeting years
  Have changed my quondam angel so,
I thank my stars, 'mid grateful tears,
  She April-fooled me years ago!

March 27, 1884

THE OLD SEXTON

NIGH to a boom that was newly made
Leaned Charles A. Dana on his pick and spade;
He smiled sardonic and paused to wait
The funeral train through the open gate.
A savage editor man was he,
And his eyes were aflame with demoniac glee
As these words came from his lips so thin:
"I gather them in — I gather them in!

"I gather them in, and their final rest
Is here — down here in the earth's dark breast.
Hancock I buried four years ago
'Neath a mossy mound where the daisies blow;

Holman and Bayard and Field I boom,
Only to leave them where violets bloom;
For, heedless of what their grandeur has
been,
I gathered them in — I gathered them in!

"I gather them in, and I never care
How the victims rage or the people swear;
Thurman, McDonald, and Flower, too,
Have gently flocked to my hullabaloo,
And now I am patiently waiting here
For the Grover Cleveland boom to appear;
And, blind to the chances it has to win,
I 'll gather it in — I 'll gather it in!"

July 5, 1884

OGLESBY (1884)

WHEN treason boldly stalked the land
And poisoned hearts of men
Till traitors rose on every hand,
A patriot called us then;
We followed, comrade,— you and I,—
Where death and wounds were thick,
And gloried in the battle-cry,
"Hurrah for Uncle Dick!"

They say that we, who knew no fears
Of death and carnage then,
Are summoned in these after years,
To follow him again;
Not with the gun nor with the sword,
But with the hoe and pick,
We come, a brave, determined horde—
Hurrah for Uncle Dick!

His waving hair was black as night
In that dear long ago;
But now with care and age 't is white
As first December snow;
But round that old and whitened head
Have honors, fast and thick,
A grand, majestic halo shed—
Hurrah for Uncle Dick!

Once tall and stately was the form
That now is stooped and bent;
Wait till he scents the coming storm
And marks the base intent
Of foemen circling round about,
And see how pow'rful quick
That grave old body straightens out—
Hurrah for Uncle Dick!

And as we rallied in the fray
With him long years ago,
So do we rally round, to-day,
The chief we reverence so.
Beware the foe, O patriots true,
Beware each traitorous trick.
We still are soldiers of the blue—
Hurrah for Uncle Dick!

July 10, 1884

THE POLITICAL MAUD

BEN BUTLER, on a summer's day,
Stood in a convention making hay;
The hay was sweet and the hay was dry,
But it was n't as cocked as old Ben's eye;
For old Ben saw on a gelding gay
Judge Nomination ride that way.

When the judge saw Ben in the hay at work,
He stopped his horse with a sudden jerk,
And he rolled his eyes on the winsome face
And the buxom form and the air of grace
And the wealth of cheek and the mesh of
hair
Of sweet Ben Butler a-working there.

"Oh," sighed the judge, "that the fate
were mine
To wed with a creature so divine!
With Ben for a mate, my life would seem
Like a poet's song or an artist's dream;
But, when they heard of my marital pick,
How like a steer some folks would kick!"

So, fearful of what his folks might say,
Judge Nomination rode away,
And left Ben Butler standing there
With her wealth of cheek and her mesh of
hair;
And of all sad words of tongue and pen
The saddest are these: "He would n't
have Ben."

July 11, 1884

It Costs to Bathe in England

"You hear of the English people boasting of their fondness for bathing," said an American resident to me, an evening or two since. "Now, I have lived in England twenty-four years, and I happen to know that until within the last fifteen years it was almost impossible to find such a thing as a bath-tub in England. Even at the present time a large majority of the English people do what they call 'bathing' in a wretched wash-bowl! Why, there is as much difference between the American bath and the English bath as there is between immersion and sprinkling. It is the American who has introduced the bath-tub into England—not the miserable

sitz-bath, which so many English folk affect, but the large, clean, wholesome tub that insures equal cleanliness to the whole surface of the body."

There is really a good excuse for the London people not being clean. It costs money to keep clean here. If in any of the public places you invade the lavatory for the purpose of cleansing your face and hands, you are promptly confronted by a person in uniform who demands a fee. Yes, you can't wash your face and hands in London without being forced to give up twopence for it. A legal tax on cleanliness!

Last week I visited an old Roman bath located in the Strand. It is an ancient affair, supposed to be fed by a spring in Holywell Street; the water is clear and cold.

"How old is this bath?" I asked.

"About eighteen hundred years old," answered the guide, "but it was unknown until three hundred years ago; then it became a fashionable resort, and subsequently Queen Elizabeth used to patronize it."

Strange commentary, this. Here in the heart of a population boasting a passion for

bathing existed for fifteen centuries a noble bath that nobody knew anything about.

Another point: I have found out why the English are such famous walkers. It is because it costs them money to sit down. I found this out the other day as I sat on a bench in Hyde Park. A man in a uniform came along and demanded twopence. "What for?" I asked. "For occupying a seat," said he. "We are authorized to collect twopence from everybody who sits down."

Visitors to the royal mews (stables) are informed by their tickets of admission that no feeing is tolerated, the supposition being that the Queen pays her hired men for the service they perform. Yet when I visited the royal mews the official flunky who acted as guide expected his shilling, and the superb factotum who is in charge of the sheds where the royal coaches (valued at thousands upon thousands of pounds) are housed stretched forth an itching palm and returned profuse thanks for a paltry threepence.

The trouble is that visitors to England are

consistently and audaciously robbed, the Americans being considered the fairest and fattest prey. There are two things which the average Englishman can neither forget nor forgive: the Revolution and the Geneva award. These things touched his purse, and that is what kills an Englishman. So the Englishman really thinks it is his duty to rob an American whensoever he can.

March 7, 1890

They Call Things Differently in London

Our old friend P. T. Barnum has brought his London season to an end amid a blaze of glory. The crowds at the concluding performances of the Greatest Show on Earth were simply enormous, and I suspect that the old gentleman comes pretty near the truth when he says that one hundred thousand people were turned away from the ticket-office during the last week. At the final performance the wealth and fashion were present in full force. Barnum's private box was occupied by the Lord Mayor and his wife, Lord Chief Justice and Lady Coleridge, Consul-General New, Vice-Consul

Johnstone, Dr. Playfair, and Mr. Fullerton of New York. There being a great clamor for Barnum, the crafty old showman made his appearance and spoke honeyed words. Later at night the Lord Mayor gave a swell dinner in honor of Mr. Barnum, and the interchange of compliments would have made a barrel of molasses turn sour with envy. You must pardon me for using that word "molasses." Having lived six months in Britain, I should have said "treacle." I study to be correct even in little matters of this kind, but I find it very hard to conform to English as it is spoken this side of the saline pool. Quite at random I make up a list of articles to which the English assign names differing from those we use.

That which we call a "bowl" is here known as a "basin." In England you ask for a "basin of bread and milk."

That which is known to us as a "pitcher" is here called a "jug." A donkey is here called a "moke"; in America a "moke" is a negro. Local slang for a cab-horse is "cat's-meat," because the meat of horses is peddled around the streets for feeding to

cats. By the way, British cats average much larger than our American cats, and they are notorious chicken-killers. The brindle cat seems to be the commonest.

What we call "crackers" are here called "biscuit," and I suspect that this is strictly correct. What we call "shoes" are here known as "boots," and what we call "boots" are here known as "bluchers." There is one shoe called the "hilo," because it runs high from the heel up back of the ankle and is cut low in front.

Our "druggist" is here a "chemist," many of the old practitioners retaining the old spelling "chymist."

What we call "ale" is here known as "bitter beer."

What is here known as a "hash" we should call a "stew," and what we call a "hash" is here known as a "mince."

In England our "overcoat" becomes a "greatcoat," our "undershirt" becomes a "vest," and our "drawers" become "pantaloons." It is said that when Mr. George W. Childs of Philadelphia was in London a number of years ago he walked into a haber-

dashery and, seeking to appear to be a native, asked to be shown the styles in silk waistcoats. "Jeems," cried the proprietor to his assistant, "step this way and show this Hamerican gentleman our flowery weskits."

What we call "sick" the Englishman calls "ill"; "sickness" here implies nausea and vomiting. The British usage is wrong, but the late Richard Grant White settled that point pretty definitely. How came the British to fall into this perversion? It was, I think, because the British can go nowhere except by water; that travel by water induces unpleasant symptoms of nausea and retching, which condition, called "sickness," gradually came to be regarded as the correct definition of "sickness." I can't imagine how the British justify their use of the words "homesick," "heartsick," and "lovesick."

Here they call a "street-car" a "tram"; correct. Here, too, an "elevator" is a "lift," and that is right.

What we call a "telegram" is here called a "telegraph"; it will probably never be de-

termined which of these usages is the better. Our "postal card" is here a "post-card"; "cuffs" become "wrists."

That material known to us as "Canton flannel" is here called "swan's-down," and our "muslin" is known hereabouts as "calico."

Our "locomotive" becomes "engine," and our "conductor" is here a "guard."

What we call "stewing" (culinary term) the British call "simmering." Our "lunch" is here a "luncheon," and our "baggage" becomes "luggage."

Our "wheat" is called "corn," and our "corn" is called "maize" or, sometimes, "Indian corn." "Pigs' feet" are called "trotters." By the way, a theatrical name for a bad actor is "rotter."

A "chill" is here called a "rigor," and the eruption commonly known among us as "hives" is here known as "nettle-rash." Candy is known variously as "sweets," "sweetmeats," and "lolly."

Writing to John Smith, your social equal, you are expected to address him as "John Smith, Esq."; if he be your tailor, gro-

cer, etc., you address him as "Mr. John Smith."

The word "apt" is exceedingly popular here. It is "apt to rain," "apt to be muddy," a man is "apt to go down-town," a bank is "apt to suspend," etc. Even the best prints use this word as a synonym for "likely" and "like." Another barbarism everywhere prevalent in the United Kingdom is the use of "directly" for the conjunction "as soon as," e.g., "directly he went out I shut the door." Charles Dickens, who was quite slovenly at times, seems to have been addicted to this indefensible vice.

What does this British word "left-tenant" mean, I should like to know.

"Quite" is another hackneyed word here; it is edged in upon every occasion.

The first criticism I would pass upon the press of London would be for the indirectness of its speech. When a newspaper writer wishes to convey the idea that yesterday was a pleasant day, he says: "Yesterday was not an unpleasant day." A good play is "not half bad." A humorous speech is "not unrelieved by wit." A riotously

applauded address is "not wholly unaccented by demonstrations of approval," and so on, *ad infin. et ad naus.* Now, all this sort of thing may be subtle and it may be conservative, but it is not in the spirit of the Anglo-Saxon, and it vexes me to find so little of the Anglo-Saxon in the literature, the speech, and the practice of the very people where I had thought to find so much.

March 10, 1890

The National Greed for Tuppence

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, February 24.

TO THE EDITOR: Why do you suffer so jaundiced a critic as your "Sharps and Flats" man to fill the columns of your paper with misrepresentations of England, its climate, its people, and its customs? I have never read anything more infamous than this person's wretched flings at what he unjustly calls the Englishman's greed for the tuppence. Give us a rest, I beg of you in the name of honesty and fair play.

Yours truly,

JOHN BULL AT LARGE.

When that bull gored this ox 't was quite a different thing. From time immemorial the English have indulged with exceeding gusto their penchant for slandering and lampooning America and Americans. Old Mother Trollope set what might be called the high-water mark, but ever since 1842, from Charles Dickens down to the ineffable Florence Sinjin, it has been a fad with British writers to vilify the country, the people, and the institutions of America.

Why have the English done this? It has been not so much because they were jealous of or envied the Americans as because they recognized the shrewdness of the tactics which, by locating a laugh elsewhere, keeps the laugh away from the object against which it should properly be directed.

For many years England has been conscious of her weakness; she knows now that at any time she is likely to be wiped off the map of Europe; like the small boy we have read of, she has been traversing a graveyard, and she has whistled to keep her courage up. Bismarck was the first to estimate her physical nothingness, and he said:

"England! Why, who cares for England?" Yet England's national brute is properly a dual creature: when Portugal is to be dealt with, lo and behold, 't is a lion that bellows and lashes his tail; but if one of the powers calls England to taw, the lion vanishes, and the timid unicorn capers daintily to what tune soever is discoursed.

It is wholly unnecessary to misrepresent the English; misrepresentation is with almost equal frequency cowardly and futile. But the truth is potent, and when it is a disagreeable truth it hurts. Saying that Smith has corns and that you trod upon Smith's corns neither proves the first proposition nor harms Smith; but if you do tread on Smith's corns, that hurts Smith, and Smith's bellowing will prove that it is corns that he has.

The Englishman's greed for the tuppence is notorious. Every foreigner who has visited this island will bear me out in the assertion that at the practice of universal begging no other so-called civilized and enlightened people can be counted in the race with the English people.

So far as this humiliating practice concerns Americans, it begins as soon as one embarks at any one of our ports for Liverpool. The first object that attracts the attention of a passenger on any of the Atlantic steamers is a box hung conspicuously between the deck and the saloon, and bearing a pathetic appeal for charity in behalf of some English hospital or school. "Spare a penny to the Disabled Seamen's Home," "Contribute your mite to the Orphan Asylum"—these and similar legends greet the voyager.

Invariably while the steamer is in its course across the sea some sort of entertainment (a concert generally) is devised to raise funds for the benefit of some English institution. Passengers give the entertainment and pay for it. Thousands of dollars are annually squeezed out of American tourists by means of these small, pettifogging, hypocritical practices.

After feeing everybody aboard the ship, the customs officers at Liverpool, the truckmen, and the porters at the dock expect their tips. The train guard waits for his tuppence—just fancy the conductor of a

magnificent express-train accepting four cents from a passenger!

On every side are men, women, and children eager to get their tuppence. Information must be paid for. You ask a man how far it is to the railway station, and, whether he tells you or not, he grovels and fawns when you toss him a ha'penny for his alleged service—a tuppence will send him in the mud at your feet.

On every side, too, are the everlasting begging boxes, surmounted by a placard beseeching you to contribute to this hospital or to that home, or to this asylum or to that charity. These boxes confront you at every hotel, in the theatres, at the street-corners, in the art gallery, at the museums —in short, wheresoever you go you are haunted by the everlasting box that pleads and gapes for your money.

But as there are more than two ways of skinning a cat, so is there more than one way of begging here in England. The servants in every public house are beggars. You patronize a restaurant or a café, and you must give the waiter who serves you a fee.

In many instances the proprietor of the place makes the servant divide this fee with him, and in some instances the proprietor coolly gobbles all the fees!

At the theatres beggars take the form of a charge for programmes. Herein is much discrimination practised. The programme which costs the patron of the boxes twenty-five cents is vended in the gallery for tuppence. At Mr. Charles Wyndham's theatre the extortion is of a pitiably humiliating character. You ask, "How much for this programme?" and you are told (with an anxious look), "Anything you please."

At Edward Terry's theatre, in the Strand, you never get back any change unless you stoutly stand out against the imposition. It is fair to say that Mr. Henry Irving and Mr. Beerbohm Tree practise rigidly the determination that no fees of any kind shall be paid in their theatres, the Lyceum and the Haymarket.

But in most instances where the legend "No fees" is exhibited you may expect high-handed extortion. Even at the Queen's

stables, where veterans have been in service for many, many years, you are expected to give up tuppence to every factotum that crosses your path, and this, too, when upon every official card of admission is printed the information that no feeing is tolerated.

The late Earl Sidney, who had the handling of the Queen's personal affairs, happened to be standing in front of Buckingham Palace one morning, when a party of tourists came up. Mistaking the earl for one of the official guides, the party asked to be conducted through the palace. It was surprising enough that the earl should have consented to serve as their guide; but it was preposterous that he should have accepted, as he did, a shilling for his services!

The guinea practice is one of the extortions of the genteel beggar. There is no such coin as a guinea now, but twenty-one shillings represent it. The sovereign is twenty shillings; when, therefore, the demand is for a guinea, you pay a sovereign and one shilling. The guinea (actually a myth) is the standard of the fashionable, the

ornate, high-toned beggar. Professional men—lawyers, doctors, actors, artists, singers, *et id genus omne*—reckon by guineas.

In America there is a continual deriding of the New England people, who pay such exceeding respect to the cents. Yet here in England the farthing (or half-cent) figures conspicuously in trade. At Glave's large shop in Oxford Street it is customary to buy of every variety of cloths for so many pence and so many farthings a yard. There used to be a shoe-dealer named Ward ("Old Man Ward" we irreverentially called him) in Fayetteville, Vermont, and once when, as a boy, I went to buy a pair of shoes, he said: "Neow, here, my lad, is a pair for a dollar 'nd six cents, and here 's a pair with a leetle better material in 'em for a dollar 'nd *seven* cents, but if you want a tiptop pair, han'-made of the best leather off'n the steer that took first premium at the cattle show last fall, I calculate you 'd rather have this pair at a dollar 'nd *eight* cents." Well, England is full of tradesmen of the Old Man Ward type. And, unlike Old Man Ward, they are by no means scrupulous about giving you

back the full amount of change due you. Detected in their petty dishonesty, they are profuse and saccharine in their apologies, and it 's worth half a crown any time to hear an English tradesman say "Thank *you*"; it is really more of a treat than to hear Patti sing "Home, Sweet Home." I am no Wagner or De Koven—to be quite frank with you, I am a poor hand at music composition; yet I fancy that I can express the divers ways of returning thanks in this wise:

The "thank you" of the American and of the Frenchman may be hypocritical, but it sounds honest; the "thank *you*" of the English tradesman bears in its very perfunctory intonation the proof of its utter hollowness.

The task of enumerating the methods practised by these curious people in this

island to mulct you of your pennies is too big a one for me to attempt upon the scale which their number and their ingenuity would seem to demand. The government itself not only countenances beggary, but actually practises extortion. The practice of imposing and collecting a fine on overweight letters is a meanness which no progressive folk would tolerate. But the most outrageous evil is that which obtains during the Christmas holidays, when government and municipal employees are suffered to go about extorting sums of money from the individual public. Every letter-carrier has to render an account of the moneys thus extorted by him, and the grand total is divided among the men in the service, even the Postmaster-General coming in for his share of this picturesque addition-division-and-silence booty.

Yet, when you come to study the whole situation here calmly and dispassionately, can you blame these wretched little creatures who hasten to open your cab door for you and stand waiting with an obsequious "me lud" for your grateful penny?

Can you wonder at the spirit and practice of beggary that certainly degrades every sense of manhood in this island?

What else can be expected of the subject when the ruler sets an example which justifies beggary and extortion?

Her Majesty the Queen has enormous wealth; she is perhaps the richest individual in all Europe, and her enormous riches have been contributed largely by the people over whom she rules. For fifty years this queen has practically been a beggar; when in that period has she not been a suppliant for more, and always more, and more? Abundantly able to provide for her children and for her grandchildren out of her private store, she has religiously refused to do so and has as religiously called upon her people to provide her with money wherewith to pay for dowries, weddings, funerals, equipages, households, pensions, etc. Here we find Dean Swift's epigram inverted, for here the big fleas have bigger fleas to bite 'em, "and so proceed, *ad infinitum.*"

So, on the whole, you will perhaps agree

with me when I say that the little beggars and petty beggaries of England would seem (however annoying) to be justified by the shining example of mendicant and miserly royalty.

April 7, 1890

A VIRGILIAN PICNIC

"COME, Chloe, beauteous maiden, come,
And here, within the flowery shade,
Enjoy with me the tuneful hum
Of bees that swarm throughout the glade.
Upon the velvet moss reclining,
And with thy murmurings in mine ear,
What thought have I of love's repining?
So come, sweet Chloe, rest thee here.

"Nay, Corydon; I fear, alack!
The ants would clamber up my back."

"Ah, Chloe, here amongst the flow'rs,
While linnets coo in vines above,
How sweet to dream away the hours,
Or weave fair sonnets to my love!

A zephyr, coming to delight me,
  Breathes in mine ear a soothing tone,
And tells me Chloe shall requite me,
  And so I smile as eke I prone."

"Rise, Corydon! I prithee rise!
You 're proning on the custard-pies."

July 31, 1884

AN ILLINOIS WAR-SONG

COME, let us quaff a stirrup-cup
To Virtue undismayed.
Fill, comrades, fill your glasses up
With sparkling Lemonade!

Here 's death to Whisky, Wine, and Beer,
To Brandy, Gin, and Rum!
We have a million voters here —
A million more will come.

We 'll pulverize the Liquor pow'r,
With all its odious jobs,
Until the Demon Drink shall cow'r
Beneath the sword of Hobbs!

The sale of cocktail, punch, and sling,
We are resolved, must stop.
As substitute therefor we bring
The fragrant Ginger-pop;

Or else, perchance, refreshing Mead,
Or Soda-water cool:
But Liquor is a fiend indeed
We don't intend shall rule.

Oh, 't is a thief that steals our wits
And all our manhood robs;
So we propose to give it fits
With gallant Brother Hobbs!

So let us quaff a stirrup-cup
Before we join the raid.
Fill, comrades, fill your glasses up
With sparkling Lemonade!

August 6, 1884

THOMAS A. HENDRICKS'S APPEAL

HOW infamous that men should raise
The foul and bitter lie
That in the old secession days,
When din of war was high,
I dealt in traitorous sneer and brag
And did not dare to go
To battle for my country's flag
Against the rebel foe!

Who was it for the Stripes and Stars
Risked fortune, fame, and life?
Who bore away the purple scars
Of many a bloody strife?
Who was it led the patriot band
And held the flag on high?
Ay, tell me truly, if you can
Who was it, if not I?

At Vicksburg, braving sword and shell,
I gloried in the fray
Till finally I fainting fell
With one leg shot away;
But on to Corinth's ghastly field
I hastened to imbrue,
And did not hesitate to yield
A paltry arm or two!

And when with Sherman to the sea
Our gallant army cross'd,
The rebel bullets followed me—
Another leg I lost;
But still I gladly drained the cup
Of deep misfortune's harm,
And down at Gettysburg gave up
Another leg and arm!

So, gallant boys who wore the blue
Through all that dismal tide,
By all those bloody days we knew
When battling side by side,
Choke off the hideous lying throats
These slanders issue from—
And next November cast your vote
For patriotic Tom!

August 8, 1884

THE EXPLORER'S WOOING

OH, come with me to the arctic seas
Where the blizzards and icebergs grow,
And dally awhile with the polar breeze
In the land of the Esquimau.
We will fish for seal and the great white bears
In their caves on the frozen shores;
We will spread our nets in the frigid lairs
Of the walrus that snorts and roars.

When the rest of creation swoons with heat
All pleasant and chipper we 'll be;
'T would be hard to find a summer retreat
As cool as the arctic sea.

We will ramble along in some snowy glade
With never a sultry sigh,
Or loll at ease in the grateful shade
Of an iceberg four miles high.

So come with me to the arctic pole —
To the land of the walrus and bear,
Where the glaciers wave and the blizzards roll,
And victuals are frequently rare.
You are plump and fat — with such a mate
In my iceberg I would dwell,
In the pleasing hope I could baffle fate
By eating you *au naturel.*

September 3, 1884

THE AHKOOND OF SWAT

WHEN the writer has written with all of his might
Of Blaine and of Cleveland a column or more,
And the editor happens along in the night
(As he generally does betwixt midnight and four)
And kills all the stuff that that writer has writ,
And calls for more copy at once, on the spot—
There is none for the writer to turn on and hit
But that distant old party, the Ahkoond of Swat.

Now the Ahkoond of Swat is a vague sort
of man
Who lives in a country far over the
sea;
Pray tell me, good reader, if tell me you
can,
What 's the Ahkoond of Swat to you
folks or to me?
Yet when one must be careful, conservative,
too,
Since the canvass is getting unpleasantly
hot,
If we must abuse some — let us haste to
imbrue
With that foreign old bloomer, the Ah-
koond of Swat!

Yet why should we poke this insipid old
king,
Who lives in the land of the tiger and
cane,
Since the talk we might make on the dotard
can't bring
The sweet satisfaction of a Cleveland or
Blaine?

A plague on these politics, statesmen, and all
Who conspire to embarrass the editor's lot;
And a plague on the man, we implore, who will call
On a fellow to write of the Ahkoond of Swat!

But vain is this fuming, this frenzy, this storm —
The printers care naught for this protest or that;
A long, dreadful hollow appears in the "form" —
And it 's copy they want, with a pref'rence for "fat."
So here 's to our friend who 's so handy in need,
Whose useful acquaintance too soon is forgot —
That distant old party and senile old seed,
The loathsome and pestilent Ahkoond of Swat!

September 19, 1884

A PLEA FOR THE CLASSICS

A BOSTON gentleman declares,
By all the gods above, below,
That our degenerate sons and heirs
Must let their Greek and Latin go!
Forbid, O Fate, we loud implore,
A dispensation harsh as that;
What! wipe away the sweets of yore;
The dear "Amo, amas, amat"?

The sweetest hour the student knows
Is not when poring over French,
Or twisted in Teutonic throes,
Upon a hard collegiate bench;
'T is when on roots and kais and gars
He feeds his soul and feels it glow,
Or when his mind transcends the stars
With "Zoa mou, sas agapo"!

So give our bright, ambitious boys
  An inkling of these pleasures, too —
A little smattering of the joys
  Their dead and buried fathers knew;
And let them sing — while glorying that
  Their sires so sang, long years ago —
The songs "Amo, amas, amat,"
  And "Zoa mou, sas agapo"!

September 23, 1884

THE SECRET OF THE SPHINX

UPON the hot Egyptian sands,
Beneath the lurid, blistering skies,
With stolid face and fireless eyes
The Sphinx in sombre grandeur stands.
Within that doleful desert place,
By desolation's doom oppress'd,
No sweet emotion fills her breast —
No smile illumes the Sphinx's face.

They say that many years ago
A Roman pretor left his home,
Resolved to go from Rome to roam —
A Roman roamin' to and fro.
This pretor happened, so they say,
To meet a humorist, whose name
Was heralded on wings of fame
Through Boston leagues and leagues away.

They roamed together far and wide—
  The pretor and the Boston wit—
  Till finally one night they lit
In Egypt by the Sphinx's side.
"Now tell me, ere we go to bed
  Within our tents, some funny tale;
  With humorous anecdote regale
My jaded soul," the pretor said.

The Sphinx was then as fair a bit
  Of female flesh as you could find,
  And, womanlike, she had a mind
For stories that partook of wit.
She, therefore, smiling bent her ear
  To hear the Massachusetts joke
  The famous Boston humorist spoke
Unto the pretor, listening near.

What was the joke we do not know—
  The ancient hist'ries do not state,
  Nor legendary lore relate,
Nor hieroglyphic tablets show;
But since that Boston wit beguiled
  The Roman pretor with the joke
  Which centuries ago was spoke,
The hapless Sphinx has never smiled.

September 23, 1884

FANCHON THE CRICKET

MY grandsire, years and years ago,
In round old English used to praise
Sweet Maggie Mitchell's pretty ways
And her fair face that charmed him so.

Her tuneful voice and curly hair,
Her coquetry and subtle art
Ensnared my grandsire's willing heart
And ever reigned supremely there.

In time my father felt the force
Of cunning Maggie Mitchell's smiles,
And, dazzled by her thousand wiles,
He sang her glories too, of course.

Quite natural, then, it was that I —
  Of such a sire and grandsire, too —
  When this dear sprite first met my view
Should learn to rhapsodize and sigh.

And now my boy — of tender age —
  Indites a sonnet to the curl
  Of this most fascinating girl
That ever romped the mimic stage!

O prototype of girlhood truth,
  Of girlhood glee and girlhood prank,
  By what good fortune hast thou drank
The waters of eternal youth?

September 26, 1884

NOVEMBER

THE wold is drear and the sedges sere,
And gray is the autumn sky,
And sorrows roll through my riven soul
As lonely I sit and sigh
"Good-by"
To the goose-birds as they fly.

With his weird wishbone to the temperate zone
Came the goose-bird in the spring;
And he built his nest in the glorious west,
And sat on a snag to sing,
Sweet thing!
Or flap his beautiful wing.

But the boom of the blast has come at last
To the goose-bird on the lea,
And the succulent thing, with shivering wing,
Flies down to a southern sea.
Ah me,
That such separation should be!

But it 's always so in this world of woe:
The things that gladden our eye
Are the surest to go to the bugs, and so
We can only wearily sigh
"Good-by"
To the goose-birds as they fly.

November 5, 1884

PARLEZ-VOUS FRANÇAIS?

THE old man sits inveiled by gloom,
His bosom heaves with dire dismay;
For in that editorial room
There booms no presidential boom,
And folks no longer come that way
To whisper, "Parlez-vous Français?"

Gone is the time he hoped to be
A diplomat in Paris gay—
When, far across the briny sea,
The festive gamins, *très jolis*,
And fair *grisettes décolletées*
Should murmur, "Parlez-vous Français?"

So let the poor old Joseph rest
  And let him pine his life away;
Nor vex that journalistic breath
Which by a hopeless grief 's distressed —
  The hopeless grief he never may
  Respond to "Parlez-vous Français?"

November 10, 1884

"GEE SWEE ZAMERICANE"

WHY should I pine and languish so?
Why should I droop and sigh?
Why should my soul be bowed in woe,
As weary days go by?
Why should I drown in sorrow's sea,
When, through the surf of pain,
This sweet salvation comes to me:
"Gee swee Zamericane!"

I thought diplomacy my forte,
And yearned for deeds of state
Amid the solemn pomps of court
In monarchies effete;
And most I hankered to abide
Hard by the river Seine,
Where I could say, with swelling pride,
"Gee swee Zamericane!"

And this is why I made the flop
  Which Reid and Halstead made,
And this is why I took a drop
  On matters of free trade;
I ate my words of '76,
  And boomed the "rascal" Blaine,
And played a thousand Jingo tricks —
  "Gee swee Zamericane!"

The die is cast, the boom is o'er,
  And Blaine is beaten bad —
The which is why I 'm feeling sore,
  And, likewise, very mad;
For, after all this harrowing strife,
  I 'm likely to remain
What I have been through all my life —
  "Gee swee Zamericane!"

November 11, 1884

CHRISTMAS

MY little child comes to my knee
And tugging pleads that he may climb
Into my lap to hear me tell
The Christmas tale he loves so well—
A tale my mother told to me,
Beginning "Once upon a time."

It is a tale of skies that rang
With angel rhapsodies sublime;
Of that great host, serene and white,
The shepherds saw one winter night;
And of the glorious stars that sang
An anthem, once upon a time.

This story of the hallowed years
Tells of the sacrifice sublime
Of One who prayed alone and wept
While his awearied followers slept—
And how his blood and Mary's tears
Commingled, once upon a time.

And now my darling at my side
And echoes of the distant clime
Bring that sweet story back to me—
Of Bethlehem and Calvary,
And of the gentle Christ that died
For sinners, once upon a time.

The mighty deeds that men have told
In ponderous tomes or fluent rhyme,
Like misty shadows fade away;
But this sweet story bides for aye,
And, like the stars that sang of old,
We sing of "Once upon a time."

December 1, 1884

CHICAGO WEATHER

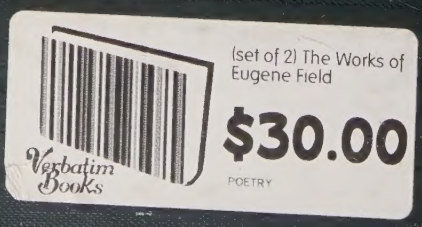
TO-DAY, fair Thisbe, winsome girl!
Strays o'er the meads where daisies blow,
Or, ling'ring where the brooklets purl,
Laves in the cool, refreshing flow.

To-morrow, Thisbe, with a host
Of amorous suitors in her train,
Comes like a goddess forth to coast
Or skate upon the frozen main.

To-day, sweet posies mark her track,
While birds sing gayly in the trees;
To-morrow morn, her sealskin sack
Defies the piping polar breeze.

So Doris is to-day enthused
  By Thisbe's soft, responsive sighs,
And on the morrow is confused
  By Thisbe's cold, repellent eyes.

December 6, 1884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